

Hebrews 12:22-24 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
 Click chart to enlarge
 Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission
 Swindoll's Chart, Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews, Another Chart

The Epistle to the Hebrews					
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25		
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE	

MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST	MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE		DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD		

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 12:22 But you have [come](#) to [Mount Zion](#) and to the [city](#) of the [living God](#), the [heavenly Jerusalem](#), and to [myriads of angels](#), ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [alla proseleluthate](#) (2PRAI) [Sion orei kai polei theou zontos](#), (PAPMSG) [lerousalem epouranio](#), [kai muriasin aggelon](#), panegurei

Amplified: But rather, you have come to Mount Zion, even to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to countless multitudes of angels in festal gathering, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

NLT: No, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels in joyful assembly. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: No, you have been allowed to approach the true Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have drawn near to the countless angelic army,

Wuest: But you have come to Mount Zion, even to the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable multitude of angels

Young's Literal: But, ye came to Mount Zion, and to a city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of messengers,

BUT YOU HAVE COME TO MOUNT ZION AND TO THE CITY OF THE LIVING GOD THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM AND TO MYRIADS OF ANGELS: [alla proseleluthate](#) (2PRAI) [Sion horei kai polei theou zontos](#) (PAPMSG) [lerousalem epouranio kai muriasin aggelon](#):

- Ps 2:6; 48:2; 132:13,14 Isa 12:6; 14:32; 28:16; 51:11,16; 59:20 Isa 60:14 Joel 2:32 Ro 11:26 Ga 4:26 Rev 14:1
- **City** - He 13:14 Ps 48:2, 87:3 Mt 5:35 Php 3:20 Rev 3:12, 21:2,10, 22:19
- **Living God** - He 3:12, 9:14, 10:31 Dt 5:26 Jos 3:10 2Ki 19:4 Ps 42:2, 84:2, Jer 10:10 Da 6:26 Ho 1:10 Mt 16:16 Ro 9:26 1Th 1:9 Rev 7:2
- [Hebrews 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ANOTHER MOUNT A BETTER MOUNT!

But - This **term of contrast** usually introduces a "change of direction." What's the change in this section? The writer's point in this section is that instead of returning to **Mount Sinai**, the Hebrew audience is urged to continue their approach to **Mount Zion**, the spiritual mountain and city where the **living God** dwells and reigns. **On Mt Sinai God is a consuming fire, whereas on Mt Zion He is consuming love.** O amazing grace. How great is our salvation! (Heb 2:3).

Horner - It is obvious that for the Christian, Mount Sinai is not to be understood as a companion with Mount Zion, even as an appendage of secondary importance. "It was only temporary. God touched it, but did not abide there." (Ibid)

Spurgeon - Every good thing is enhanced in value by its opposite. Light is all the brighter to eyes that have wept in darkness; food is all the sweeter after you have known hunger; and Zion is all the fairer because of Sinai. The contrast between free grace and law makes grace appear the more precious to minds that have known the rigor of the commandment.

The **Nelson Study Bible** nicely summarizes this section noting that "In these verses, the author of Hebrews contrasts the Mosaic covenant with the New Covenant by contrasting two mountains: Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. At Mount Sinai, the Israelites received the Law from God with fear and trembling, for God displayed at that time His awesome power (see Ex 19:10-20:26). In contrast, Christian believers have come to a heavenly Jerusalem on Mount Zion through Jesus' blood. This mountain is a celebration of the Holy One, attended by angels, believers, and righteous people. The author makes the contrast between the two covenants vivid, and then once again exhorts his readers not to reject Christ's offer of salvation (see Hebrews 12:25-29). ([Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. The Nelson Study Bible: NKJV. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

But you have come to Mount Zion - Whereas Mt Sinai was visible but not touchable, Mt Zion is invisible (in this present earthly life) but is touchable (so to speak)! The writer uses the perfect tense for **you have come** which views this heavenly possession of Mt Zion as already attained by those who have believed the new covenant and emphasizes that this heavenly possession is their possession **forever**. In spirit they were residents of the city already, though in body they were strangers and aliens on earth. That there is yet to be an earthly manifestation of the city is clear from the later reference in Hebrews 13:14-note to "the city which is yet to come."

S Lewis Johnson on **you have not come** (Heb 12:18+) and **you have come** (Heb 12:22) - Notice the two words; they are exactly alike in the original text, "**You have not come.**" That, of course, with the negative. And then, Hebrews 12:22, "**You have come.**" without the negative. So "**You have come,**" "**You have not come.**" So he's talking about what they have **not** come to [and] what they have **now** come to. The **former**, the Sinaitic revelation is the revelation of the sheer majesty of God, the absolute inapproachability of God, the sheer terror of the presence of the Lord God apart from the blood of sprinkling of the Cross of Calvary. That's so important for us to remember because it's a marvelous picture of how our sin and our judgment, and the fact that apart from Jesus Christ we should experience the lost-ness of eternal life, of eternal judgment....But, here he says, "**You have come to Mount Zion.**" Now, when, I think, about this "**you have come**" and to "**the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**" the very fact that he puts it this way that we "**have come**" would let me know that he's not talking about what we have in experience now, but what we have by position being in Christ. So we have in principle **come** to this position before the Lord God. We have **come** to Mount Zion. We are as if we have come to Mount Zion. We are as if we have come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, because it's so certain that we will experience these things. The future is already present for us in the sense that in today and the blessings that we have in Jesus Christ, we possess the things that will be ours in the future. One of the interesting things about this word, that's used twice in verse 18 and verse 22, "**you have come.**" Verse 18 with the negative, "**you have not come.**" But the same word, same verb, "**you have come,**" is in a tense ([perfect tense](#)) that ordinarily refers to something in the past, the results of which continue, at least, to the present. So, in other words, it's not "you came," but "**you have come,**" and you now stand in this position of being possessed in reality of Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the firstborn and all of the other blessings that are set forth here. **This is our permanent status, so to speak. We say "our position" before the Lord God....**(see his sermon for lengthy illustration)...That's what we are. We're not misers, I hope. But we are just like that. No one ever really knows what we have, without investing in the Stock Market, without ever reading The Wall Street Journal, without anything like that. We "have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the angels, the general assembly, the church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven and to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." What a marvelous position we have. How rich we really are. ([Sermon](#))

MacArthur on **Mt Sinai** versus **Mt Zion** - Sinai symbolizes law and Zion symbolizes grace. No man can be saved by the law, but any man can be saved by grace. The law confronts us with commandments, judgment, and condemnation. Grace presents us with forgiveness, atonement, and salvation.(Ibid)

Have come ([4334](#)) (**proserchomai** from **prós** = facing + **erchomai** = come) means literally to come facing toward and so to approach or come near. To come to visit or associate with. It describes the approach to or entry into a deity's presence. In the **Septuagint (LXX) proserchomai** was the verb used to describe the approach of the priests to Jehovah for worship and to perform of their priestly (Levitical) functions. But here in Hebrews, under the New covenant, all seven uses of **proserchomai** refer to believers possessing the privilege of access to God the Father through Christ the Great High Priest.

Longman on Hebrews 12:22-24 - These verses form one long sentence, which begins with the strongly contrasting clause **But you have come to** and continues with a series of nine descriptive phrases identifying the place and the people that represent the Christian's true destination (In the Greek, each of the nine phrases is introduced by "and" except for "the heavenly Jerusalem," which stands in apposition to "the city of the living God." The first three phrases identify the place, while the remainder speak of its inhabitants). For **have come to (proserchomai)** as a term for the relationship with God that results from Christ's saving work, see

Heb 4:16-note; Heb 7:2-note, and cf. Heb 10:22-note; Heb 11:6-note. It is important to note that the author speaks not merely of a future hope (as he did when speaking of the patriarchs in Heb 11:10, 13–16) but of a **salvation already achieved**—“**you have come**”; those who belong to Christ are already citizens of Mount Zion. The author is calling them not to a new status but to appreciate and enjoy what is already theirs. (**Ed:** This begs the question beloved - do we understand our new status? Do we truly give thanks to God for our new status? We can hardly do so if we don't comprehend this aspect of what Jesus accomplished for us). (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

Here are the seven uses of this **proserchomai** in Hebrews...

Hebrews 4:16 (note) Let us therefore **draw near** with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need. (**Comment:** "Let us..." emphasizes that this privilege is always available to those under the New Covenant. Do we really comprehend and avail ourselves of the profundity of this privilege?)

Hebrews 7:25 (note) Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who **draw near** (present tense = emphasizes continual activity) to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 10:1 (note) For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who **draw near**.

Hebrews 10:22 (note) let us **draw near** with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 11:6 (note) And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he whocomes (drawn near) to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Hebrews 12:18 (note) For you have not **come** (drawn near) to a mountain that may be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,

Hebrews 12:22 (note) But you have **come** (drawn near) to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels

MT. ZION CONSUMING LOVE

Mount Zion ([see notes on Zion](#)) is the site of **Mt Moriah** (means "the place where Yahweh sees") where Abraham sacrificed Isaac and corresponds to the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount. Many scholars feel that the Temple Mount area is in the approximate site of **Mt Moriah** where Abraham offered Isaac his "only son" whom he loved. Centuries later Mt Moriah was the site of the threshing floor of **Ornan** which David purchased for Solomon's temple (1Chr 21:18ff, 2Sa 24:24, 25, 2Chr 3:1] And nearby is another "mount" of sacrifice known as **Golgotha** (Jn19:17) also called **Calvary** (in same range as **Moriah** but slightly NW) on which God the Father offered up His only Son, the Son Whom He loved (Jn 3:16, 3:35). Yes, our God is consuming love, but don't forget that He is still a consuming fire. Lord, give us a healthy, holy fear of Who You really are, and may that reverential awe motivate us to godliness and holiness. Amen

Longman on Mt Zion - Mount Zion" echoes a frequent OT name for Jerusalem (especially the temple hill), which is also used for the people of God whose life and worship is centered on his city; the name therefore has strong covenantal associations. In the NT it is used elsewhere only in OT quotations except for Revelation 14:1, where the Lamb is seen standing on Mount Zion among his redeemed people. Its use here in contrast with Mount Sinai reminds us that, despite the "obsolescence" of the old covenant, the people of God redeemed by Christ are in continuity with those of the OT. (Ibid)

Mount Zion was also the location of the Jebusite stronghold that David captured (2Sa 5:7) and made the religious center of his kingdom by bringing to it the golden Ark of God representing God's presence with His people. This is the site on which Solomon later built the Temple and installed the Ark (1Ki 8:1).

Zion is synonymous with **Jerusalem** and thus this holy place became the earthly dwelling-place of God. In the new Covenant, believers in Christ have come to the heavenly counterpart, the **Jerusalem** from above.

John MacArthur - Whereas Sinai was forbidding and terrifying, Zion is inviting and gracious Sinai is closed to all, because no one is able to please God on Sinai's terms—perfect fulfillment of the law. Zion is open to all, because Jesus Christ has met those terms and will stand in the place of anyone who will come to God through Him. Zion symbolizes the approachable God. Sinai was covered by clouds and darkness; Zion is the city of light. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth" (Ps. 50:2). Sinai stands for judgment and death; Zion for forgiveness and life, "for there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forever" (Ps. 133:3). (MacArthur

Paul distinguished between the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem in his allegorical exposition on Hagar (and Ishmael, born according to the flesh) and Sarah (and Isaac, born according to the Spirit) "Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. (Galatians 4:25-26+)

Comment: The phrase **Jerusalem which is above** was familiar to the rabbinical teachers, who conceived the heavenly Jerusalem as the archetype of the earthly. On the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, the heavenly archetype would be let down to earth, and would be the capital of the messianic theocracy.

And so as depicted allegorically by **Paul** in **Galatians 4+**, the Law (the Old Covenant) had its **Mount Sinai** but faith has its **Mount Zion** which is the same city which Abraham and the patriarchs sought, the writer of Hebrews recording that by faith (not sight) Abraham "was looking for the city which has foundations, Whose Architect and Builder is God. (Heb 11:10+)...But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them (Heb 11:16+).

John saw this city in his vision recording - And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. (See **notes** [Revelation 21:1](#); [Revelation 21:2](#))

In one sense, this is still to come (see Hebrews 13:14-note, "but we are looking for the city that is to come"), but we have also already arrived there in spirit. In Ephesians for example Paul describes the heavenly position of believers writing that God has "raised us up with Him (Christ), and seated us with Him (Christ, Who is at the right hand of the throne of God) in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:6-note)

Christians are now citizens of the heavenly city and enjoy its privileges. Paul wrote that believers are enrolled as citizens of heaven even while on earth Paul explaining that "our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior the Lord Jesus Christ (Php 3:20-note)

We are in **Mount Zion** by virtue of our incorporation in Christ as explained above. To reiterate, the use of the **perfect tense** (have come) emphasizes our permanent, continuing state. This is why the seemingly endless miles of life's marathon and the inevitable heartbreak hills should not deter us from pressing on toward the goal, running the race with endurance.. We are both in Zion and yet at the same time are marching to Zion!

Spurgeon - You have come to the land of pardon, peace, and promise: you are in the home of life, love, and liberty. You have come to the Lord of adoption, acceptance, and glory. Do not, I ask you, construe the acts and dealings of God with your soul after the mean and slavish manner that unbelief suggests to you, but believe your God in the teeth of all you hear, or see, or feel. The Lord has come to prove you, to put His fear before your face, and to keep you from sin; why look for sweet fruit from the bitter tree of your present grief, and flee not from your God.

Brian Bell - When David took the city of Zion from the Jebusites, he brought the Ark of the Covenant there for its new home, thus making this place the place where God dwelt with His people. If you are a believer you already are a citizen. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil.3:20+) We are citizens of Mount Zion who have left Mount Sinai and marching toward our new home (Zion) That new city Jerusalem will have beauty unfathomable; food delectable; fellowship incredible; joy unbelievable; and a love inconceivable. ([Sermon](#))

And to the city of the living God- He was also "**living**" at Mt Sinai, but unapproachable so that any living being would soon be dead if they touched the mountain. At Mt Zion the **living God** could be approached.

Wuest - **The city of the living God** is rightly restored by TNIV to its place after "Mount Zion"; it is another way of describing the same place. We have heard in Heb 11:10, 16 of the "city" promised to the wandering patriarchs, and the same vision is set before Christian believers in Heb 13:14. The presence of "**the living God**" (see Heb 3:12) sets this city apart from all its earthly foreshadowings. The phrase has special force here, following the account of the Sinai theophany, since the people's fear there derived from their hearing the voice of "the living God" (Dt 5:26) ([Ibid](#))

Harry Ironside on to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem- This is not to be confounded with the earthly city of the great King, which will yet be the joy of the whole earth (**ED: [HE IS DESCRIBING THE MILLENNIUM](#)**), for our portion is not to be in this world even when Christ Himself reigns, but we are to reign with Him from the heavenly Jerusalem above. This, of course, is the **New Jerusalem**, the Bride, the Lamb's wife of Rev. 19 and Revelation 21. It embraces all the heavenly saints, that is, all those who have died in faith throughout the centuries, all who in every dispensation believed God and were therefore quickened by His Spirit. **The heavenly Jerusalem** is preeminently the Home of the Church and therefore is designated as the bridal city; but saints of all

other dispensations who have passed through death and entered into resurrection life will, as one has expressed it, be upon its "Burgess roll." This heavenly Jerusalem will be the throne seat of the entire universe of God.

Steven Cole on city of the Living God - Hebrews mentions the *city* more than any other New Testament book. This is "the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Heb 11:10). It's the city that God prepared for the Old Testament saints who died in faith without receiving the promises (Heb 11:13, 16). And while we now dwell in it spiritually, there is a sense in which it is yet "to come" (Heb 13:14). *City* conveys a sense of orderliness and security against the enemy. It's a place where needs for food and water are met, and where there is fellowship with others. But this is not any city; it's the city of *the living God*. In Hebrews 3:12, the author warned us, "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from *the living God*." In Heb 9:14, he wrote that the blood of Christ would "cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve *the living God*." As opposed to ritualistic, legalistic religion, through Christ we enter into an abiding relationship with the living God. ([Sermon](#))

City of the Living God - The writer has already used this phrase **Living God** three times in this letter (see [next section](#) for all uses in Scripture)...

Heb 3:12 Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the **living God**.

Heb 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the **living God**?

Heb 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the **living God**.

The heavenly Jerusalem - This is the holy city that the apostle John saw in the Revelation

Then ([THIS IMPORTANT TIME PHRASE](#) MARKS SUCCESSION - THE FINAL JUDGMENT HAS JUST BEEN COMPLETED - Rev 20:11-15+ - NOTE THAT IN VERSE 11 JOHN SAYS THERE IS **NO** HEAVEN AND EARTH DURING THIS TIME OF THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT! FASCINATING! SO IT MEANS WE NEED A NEW ONE AND THAT IS WHAT JOHN NOW DESCRIBES) I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw **the holy city, new Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." (Rev 21:1-4+)

The Law had its earthly Jerusalem but faith has its heavenly Zion. The city of the living God is in heaven, the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

As someone has well stated "We have already arrived in principle where in full reality we shall be forever. The future is already the present. In today we possess tomorrow. On earth we own Heaven."

ANGELS, ANGELS EVERYWHERE!

And to myriads of angels - Believers don't worship the angels of God, but worship God with the angels! Ponder this future worship service for a moment if you need to be excited and encouraged. This world is not our home. We are just passing through. We live for a short while in "time," but shall soon and very soon enter into "eternity" in the present of the Living God and myriads of worshipping angels.

Spurgeon - Some of those bright beings are called [seraphim](#), or burning ones, for they come and go like flames of fire. It must have been terrible to look up to Sinai and see it casting forth its flames, but it is with delight that we look toward the angels who excel in strength, and spend that strength in the service of the Lord and His people. These are a wall of fire round about us.

Longman - "Thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly" reminds us of the great tableau of the worship of the angelic host in Rev 4 and 5 (cf. also the myriads of angels in Dt 33:2; Da 7:10), but the addition of "in joyful assembly" adds a note of festivity and celebration—the term was used for great celebratory gatherings, both religious and secular. The angels, whom we have seen in Heb 1:14 to be under the authority of the Son, are gathered in heaven to celebrate his triumph. (Ibid)

Myriads ([3461](#))([murias](#) from [murios](#) = very many, innumerable) means a myriad (an indefinitely great number) or ten thousand or simply a number that cannot be counted.

Wuest feels that "The **angels** are introduced here because they are the usual accompaniment of God's glory and ministers of His will."

Angels (32)([aggelos/angelos](#) possibly from **ago** = to bring) literally means a messenger (one who bears a message - Lk 1:11, 2:9, etc or does an errand). Most of the NT uses refer to heavenly angels (messengers) who are supernatural, transcendent beings with power to carry out various tasks. All uses of **aggelos** that refer to angels are masculine gender (the feminine form of *aggelos* does not occur.) **Vine** adds that **aggelos** refer to "an order of created beings, superior to man, Heb 2:7; Ps. 8:5, belonging to Heaven, Mt. 24:36; Mark 12:25, and to God, Luke 12:8, and engaged in His service, Psa. 103:20. **Angels** are spirits, Heb. 1:14, i.e., they have not material bodies as men have; they are either human in form, or can assume the human form when necessary, cp. Luke 24:4, with Lk 24:23, Acts 10:3 with Acts 10:30."

The **myriads of angels** are referred to several times in Scripture. For example Moses records a "sighting" with which most of his Jewish readers would have been familiar "And he said, "The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; At His right hand there was flashing lightning for them. (Dt 33:2)

Comment: Evidently there were myriads of holy ones with God on Mount Sinai as His right hand wrote the commandments for Israel on tables of stone.

Angels were present at the giving of the law Luke recording "you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it." (Acts 7:53+)

Brian Bell - Oh the glory of singing and worshipping with these terrific beings that have ministered to us, watched over us, passing in and out of our lives.

In a parallel passage Paul asks "Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been **ordained through angels** by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. (Galatians 3:19)

Comment: The account of the giving of the law through Moses on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:9-25 makes no mention of angels. However as noted above Deuteronomy 33:2 does mention **holy ones** which is almost assuredly a reference to angels through whom the Law was ordained. See also Psalm 68:17

And earlier in **Hebrews** the writer reminded his readers of "the **word spoken through angels** (which) proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense (Heb 2:2-note)

And as the writer of **Hebrews** asked rhetorically in the first chapter "Are they (referring to angels) not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation? (Heb 1:14-note)

These angels are mighty flaming spirits passing in and out of our lives, moving around us and over us just as they did saints of old.

The Living God - a phrase repeated 28 times in the NASB...

Dt 5:26 'For who is there of all flesh, who has heard the voice of the **living God** speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

Josh 3:10 And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the **living God** is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite.

1 Sam 17:26 Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the **living God**?"

1 Sam 17:36 "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the **living God**."

2 Ki 19:4 'Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the **living God**, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left."

2 Ki 19:16 "Incline Thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open Thine eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the **living God**.

Psa 42:2 My soul thirsts for God, for the **living God**; When shall I come and appear before God?

Psa 84:2 My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the **living God**.

Isa 37:4 'Perhaps the LORD your God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the **living God**, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.'

Isa 37:17 "Incline Thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open Thine eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to all the words of Sennacherib, who sent them to reproach the **living God**."

Jer 10:10 But the LORD is the true God; He is the **living God** and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.

Jer 23:36 "For you will no longer remember the oracle of the LORD, because every man's own word will become the oracle, and you have perverted the words of the **living God**, the LORD of hosts, our God."

Dan 6:20 And when he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the **living God**, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

Dan 6:26 "I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is the **living God** and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion will be forever."

Hosea 1:10 Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered; And it will come about that, in the place Where it is said to them, "You are not My people," It will be said to them, "You are the sons of the **living God**."

Mat 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the **living God**."

Mat 26:63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the **living God**, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God."

Acts 14:15 and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you in order that you should turn from these vain things to a **living God**, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM."

Rom 9:26 "AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE **LIVING GOD**."

2 Cor 3:3 being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the **living God**, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Cor 6:16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the **living God**; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE."

1 Tim 3:15 but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the **living God**, the pillar and support of the truth.

1 Tim 4:10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the **living God**, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

Heb 3:12 Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.

Heb 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the **living God**?

Heb 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the **living God**.

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the **living God**, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

Rev 7:2 And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the **living God**; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TECHNICAL NOTE - The **NAS** has the **general assembly** in Heb 12:23 whereas some versions place it at the end of Heb 12:22 = **ESV** = "innumerable angels **in festal gathering.**" **CSB** = myriads of angels in **festive gathering**, **NET** = "to myriads of angels, to the assembly."

Wuest writes that "The words "**general assembly**" are the translation of paneguris (πανηγυρις), "a festal gathering of the whole people to celebrate public games or other solemnities" (classical meaning). Here it refers to a festal gathering of the holy angels, and to the saints of God, living and dead.

Spurgeon on this phrase **festal gathering** - I suppose he speaks of all the saints after the death and resurrection of our Lord and the descent of the Holy Ghost. He refers to the whole church, in the midst of which the Holy Spirit now dwells. We are come to a more joyous sight than Sinai, and the mountain burning with fire. The Hebrew worshiper, apart from his sacrifices, lived continually beneath the shadow of the darkness of a broken law. He was startled often by the tremendous note of the trumpet—which threatened judgment for that broken law—and thus he lived ever in a condition of bondage.

Steven Cole - Most scholars understand "**general assembly**" (**NASB**) to be connected with the **myriads of angels**. The Greek word was used of a festival or celebration. It points to the angels joyously worshiping God, and the fact that we join their chorus of praise. This, too, is something to which already we have come, and yet the full experience remains in the future. We have come to it in the sense that when we worship God in the joy of our salvation, the angels join with us (1 Pet. 1:12). But in the future, as John saw (Rev. 5:11-12),

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

While we cannot begin to experience anything that glorious on earth, I challenge you to work at your worship. Apathetic, ho-hum, "worship" is sin! It shows that we don't understand the majesty of our God, and we are not focused on His great salvation that He lavished on us by His grace. Shake off your apathy and ask God to fill your heart with His joy. You're joining the angels in chorus as you gather with the saints to worship! ([Sermon](#))

HUMOROUS ILLUSTRATION - The little girl was happily humming a hymn as she dusted the furniture to help her mother.

"Mommie, will I be dusting God's chair when I get to heaven, the way the hymn says?" she asked.

Mother looked up with surprise,

"Which hymn, honey?"

"And dust around the throne," her little girl quoted.

It took a while before the mother learned that she was quoting a line from the hymn "Marching to Zion," with the phrase, "and thus surround the throne"!

A Philadelphia law firm sent flowers to an associate in Baltimore upon the opening of its new offices. Through some mix-up, the ribbon that bedecked the floral piece read "Deepest Sympathy." When the florist was informed of his mistake, he let out a cry of alarm. "Good heavens," he exclaimed, "then the flowers that went to the funeral said, 'Congratulations on your new location!'" Heaven will be a wonderful new location.

Thoughts Of Heaven - Cartoonists often depict those who have gone to heaven as white-robed, ghostly forms floating among the clouds or sitting on golden stairs playing harps. What a far cry from the picture we find in the Bible!

In 1 Corinthians 15, we read that our resurrection bodies, although not subject to death, will be real and tangible—not mere apparitions. And Revelation 21:1-5 tells us that God will bring about "a new heaven and a new earth." He will bring down "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22), and set it upon the new earth as the "New Jerusalem." It is described as having streets, walls, gates, and even a river and trees (Revelation 22:1-5).

Life in that city will be wonderful, free from all the debilitating effects of sin. There will be no more death, sorrow, mourning, and pain, for God will make "all things new." But best of all, He Himself will come to live among us, making possible a new level of intimacy

with Him.

It's difficult to envision such an existence, but what an exciting prospect! It is all possible because of what Jesus did when He died for us on the cross. This should motivate us to worship Him, live godly lives, and tell others how they too can be assured of a glorious future. —Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The more we love Jesus the more we'll long for heaven.

F B Meyer - Our Daily Walk - OUR HERITAGE AND OUR GOAL- Heb 12:22-24.

WE ARE far from being perfect. When in our deepest moments, we ascend into the Holiest, on the wings of faith and prayer, we pass through a vast host of sympathetic spirits, all of whom are devoted to the same Lord and Master, and are joining in the same act of worship. Many of them have known and helped us in our earthly life, and they have been sent forth to minister to us, and to help us on our way. "Ye are come to the spirits of just men made perfect."

We are also come unto God, the Judge of all. When Moses stood before God on the Mount, he said: "I exceedingly fear and quake." But we may come with boldness to the footstool of the Eternal Throne, though our God is a consuming fire, for in Christ Jesus we stand accepted. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and His Blood speaks better things than that of Abel. That blood cried against Cain. But the Blood of Jesus cries on our behalf; it has opened the way into the Holiest; has cleansed us from our sins; has ratified the New Covenant, and is the Pledge of our redemption.

Therefore, although we realise our sinfulness and imperfection, let us arise into the unseen, and join with the One Church of the Redeemed in heaven and on earth. We are come to it in the purpose of God, and by the all-sufficing work of Christ our Lord, but let us see to it that we come also in our spiritual realization, communion, and fellowship.

We are members of the Church Universal, citizens of the Heavenly City. Heirs of that precious Redemption, which has severed us from things that are seen, and made us part of that blessed throng that no man can number—"the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven." Neither life, nor death, nor rite, nor church-order, can divide those who are for ever one with each other because they are one with Christ. Nothing but sin and obtuseness of soul can exclude us from living fellowship with saints of all communions and sects, denominations and ages.

PRAYER - Accept our thanks, O God, for this foretaste of the bliss of Paradise. To Thee we would pour forth our tribute of adoring love, and join with angels and the spirits of the Redeemed in worship. Unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, be blessing and honour, glory and dominion, for ever. AMEN.

Invisible Companions

You have come to . . . an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly. —Hebrews 12:22-23

One Sunday morning while traveling in West Virginia, we visited a small church in a tiny village. Only 15 people were present, yet they radiated joy as they sang. And the pastor preached from the Bible with enthusiasm. But I couldn't shake a feeling of sympathy for him and his people. With little chance for growth, it looked like a discouraging ministry.

But the testimony of a young seminarian showed me how wrong I was! Assigned to minister in a small village chapel, he was dismayed when only two people stayed for the communion service. As he read from the liturgy, he came to the words: "Therefore, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we worship and adore Thy glorious name." That sentence changed everything for him. In his heart he said, "God forgive me. I did not know I was in that great company."

When we came to Christ in faith, we joined an invisible host of companions, what the writer of Hebrews says is an "innumerable company of angels," and "the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (12:22-23). Keep this amazing reality in mind as you worship God. It will give great meaning to every service, whether thousands of fellow worshipers are present, or just two or three. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Glory to God, and praise and love
Be ever, ever given
By saints below and saints above,
The church in earth and heaven.
—Wesley

When Christians worship here on earth, the hosts of heaven are worshipping with them.

Hebrews 12:23 to the [general assembly](#) and [church](#) of the [firstborn](#) who are [enrolled](#) in [heaven](#), and to [God](#), the [Judge](#) of [all](#), and to the [spirits](#) of the [righteous made perfect](#), ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [kai ekklesia prototokon apogegrammenon](#) (RPPMPG) [en ouranois. kai krite theo panton. kai pneumasi dikaion teteleiomemon.](#) (RPPMPG)

Amplified: And to the church (assembly) of the Firstborn who are registered [as citizens] in heaven, and to the God Who is Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous (the redeemed in heaven) who have been made perfect, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge of all people. And you have come to the spirits of the redeemed in heaven who have now been made perfect. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: the great assembly of Heaven and the Church of the first-born whose names are written above. You have drawn near to God, the judge of all, to the souls of good men made perfect

Wuest: to a festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men who have been brought to completeness,

Young's Literal: to the company and assembly of the first-born in heaven enrolled, and to God the judge of all, and to spirits of righteous men made perfect,

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORN WHO ARE ENROLLED IN HEAVEN: [kai ekklesia prototokon apogegrammenon](#) (RPPMPG) [en ouranois](#):

- **General** - Ps 89:7, 111:1 Ac 20:28, Eph 1:22, 5:24, 25, 26, 27 Col 1:24 1Ti 3:5
- **firstborn**: Ex 4:22, 13:2 Dt 21:17 Ps 89:27 Jer 31:9 Jas 1:18 Rev 14:4
- **Enrolled** - Ex 32:32 Ps 69:28 Lk 10:20 Php 4:3 Rev 13:8, 20:15
- [Hebrews 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

General assembly ("festal assembly" = ESV) - note that in the Greek text **paneguris** is the last section of Hebrews 12:22 (see there) and is placed in that verse in the ESV but is placed in Heb 12:23 in the NASB.

General assembly ([3831](#)) (**paneguris** from **pás** = all, + **águris** = an assembly from **agora** = public square, marketplace) is used only here in the NT to describe a solemn assembly convened for purposes of a happy, joyous festivity. The Greeks used paneguris to describe a festal gathering of the whole people to celebrate public games or other solemnities.

The verb form **panegurizo** is used in Isaiah where God declares "Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her (**Septuagint** translates the Hebrew with the verb **panegurizo** = to celebrate a public festival), all you who love her; Be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her (Isaiah 66:10)

Church ([1577](#))(**ekklesia** from **ek** = out + **klesis** = a calling, verb = **kaleo** = to call) literally means called out (but see note by Louw-Nida below) and as commonly used in the Greco-Roman vernacular referred to citizens who were called out from their homes to be publicly assembled or gathered to discuss or carry out affairs of state. **Wuest** writes that "The word *assembly* is a good one-word translation of ekklesia."

Louw and Nida adds that "Though some persons have tried to see in the term ekklesia a more or less literal meaning of 'called-out ones,' this type of etymologizing is not warranted either by the meaning of **ekklesia** in NT times or even by its earlier usage. The term **ekklesia** was in common usage for several hundred years before the Christian era and was used to refer to an assembly of persons constituted by well-defined membership. In general Greek usage it was normally a socio-political entity based upon citizenship in a city-state and in this sense is parallel to demos (a group of citizens assembled for socio-political activities). For the NT, however, it is important to understand the meaning of **ekklesia** as 'an assembly of God's people.' ([Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament](#))

As explained below Jesus is the **firstborn** and by virtue of our union with Him we are firstborn sons of God. All the rights of

inheritance go to the firstborn-to us who are "co-heirs with Christ" (Ro 8:17-note).

Longman - The church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven again reminds us of Revelation, where in Rev 7 the worship of the angels is swelled by the uncountable throng of the redeemed from all nations. (For the "names written in heaven," cf. Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 21:27.) Elsewhere in the NT, "firstborn" is used as a title of Christ himself (see in this letter 1:6), not of his people, but it recalls the OT description of Israel collectively as God's "firstborn son" (Ex 4:22; Jer 31:9). Here it may well be intended to include God's true people of both OT and NT eras. The firstborn is the heir, the most precious child, and the church (or "assembly"—*ekklesiá*; it need not carry here its developed Christian sense; cf. Heb 2:12, its only other use in this letter) consists of those whom God has appointed as his heirs (Heb 1:14; 6:12, 17) and who have not, like Esau, bartered away their birthright (Heb 12:16–17). (Ibid)

Spurgeon - The term "firstborn" often meant, in Scripture, the most excellent, the chief. Jesus Christ, because of the excellence of His character, is said to be "the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom 8:29-note), "the firstborn over all creation" (Col 1:15-note), and "the firstborn from the dead, so that in he himself may become first in everything" (Col 1:18-note). So, although believers are, by nature, the children of wrath, even as others, yet after Christ has renewed them, they become the excellent of the earth in whom should be all our delight. But the term "firstborn" has a second meaning in Scripture. The firstborn, under the old Mosaic economy, were chosen by God for Himself. When He smote the firstborn of Egypt, He set apart for Himself all the firstborn of Israel. He might have selected the youngest of the family, or the second, if He had chosen to do so, for God does as He wills, and "he will not answer all a person's words" (Job 33:13).

Brian Bell on first-born - In ancient days the kings kept a register of their faithful citizens (like king Ahasuerus having the Book of Records, read to him, & ran across the faithful citizen Mordecai) Firstborn – all rights of inheritance go to the 1st born, to us who are co-heirs w/Christ. Bishop Westcott says, we are a society of eldest sons of God. [there are no 2nd, 3rd, 4th sons & daughters in the church] ([Sermon](#))

First-born (firstborn) ([4416](#))(**prototokos** from **protos** = first, foremost, in place order or time; rank dignity + **titko** = beget, to bear, bring forth) can mean **first-born chronologically** (Lk 2:7), but refers primarily to position, rank, priority of position and emphasizes quality or kind, not time with the idea of "preeminence".

Prototokos is used 8 times in the NT and four refer to Jesus -- Colossians 1:18(note), Romans 8:29 (note), Hebrews 1:6 (note), and Rev 1:5 (note) Each of these references to Christ as **prototokos** are in somewhat different contexts so be careful not to be confused. **Vine** helps untangle these uses by pointing out that in Colossians 1:18(note) and Revelation 1:5 (note) **firstborn** refers to His resurrection, in Romans 8:29 (note) to His position in relationship to the Church, in Hebrews 1:6 (note) to His Second Advent when the word "again" is place in the right place (the Authorized Version gives a wrong translation, making the "again" seem to introduce a quotation, instead of signifying the second time when God will bring His Son into the world).

In both Greek and Jewish culture, the **first-born** was the son who had the right of inheritance. He was **not** necessarily the first one born chronologically. Although Esau was born first chronologically, it was Jacob who declared the "**first-born**" in regard to the blessing from Isaac (Jacob speaking to Esau said "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his **birthright** (Septuagint translates Hebrew with Greek word **prototokos**) to Jacob." [Gen 25:33]).

The nation of **Israel** was figuratively called God's **first-born** in Exodus 4:22+ (see also comments on Ex 13:15) and Jer 31:9+ (Ephraim [ISRAEL] is My firstborn). Though Israel clearly was not the first people born, they held first place or the place of pre-eminence in God's sight among all the nations (cf Deut 7:7).

Solomon was the preeminent son of David, although he was not the actual first born ("Sons were born to David at Hebron: his**first-born** [Septuagint translates with Greek **prototokos**] was Amnon" 2Sa 3:2)

In Ps 89:27, God says of the Messiah that He "shall make him My **first-born**" then defines what He means—"the highest of the kings of the earth."

In Revelation 1:5 (note), Jesus is called **the first-born of the dead** even though He was not the first person to be resurrected chronologically.

Of all ever raised, He is the preeminent One. Romans 8:29(note) refers to Him as the first-born in relation to the church. In all the above cases, **first-born** clearly means **highest in rank**, not first created.

In the present verse **the firstborn** enjoy the rights of **firstborn** sons, because of their union with Christ, the **Firstborn**.

The **assembly of the firstborn** will have all Christians of all times as its members. It will have its first full**assembly** in the future age with the OT **spirits of righteous men made perfect** are together with NT saints forever. And thus this reference is to the whole communion of saints (all Christians of all times) who have come, not merely into the presence of the church, but into its membership

by faith in Christ. The writing of their names in heaven recalls Jesus' words to his disciples, " Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (Lk 10:20+).

They will all share with Jesus the title of **firstborn** (Col 1:18+) because they are "heirs of God and coheirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17+).

AND TO GOD, THE JUDGE OF ALL: kai krite theo panton:

- **God** - He 6:10, 11, 12, 9:27, Ge 18:25, Ps 50:5,6, 94:2, 96:13, 98:9 Mt 25:31, 32, 33, 34 Jn 5:27 2Th 1:5, 6, 7 1Pe 2:23
- [Hebrews 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE JUDGE OF ALL

God the Judge - Earlier the writer had reminded his readers of this certainty explaining that there is no reincarnation but "it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes **judgment.**" (Hebrews 9:27-note)

Yes even as at Mt Sinai He is a Righteous Judge of all but PRAISE GOD, we have been justified and redeemed by the payment of the precious blood of the Lamb of God and no longer stand under the curse of the Law and its condemnation. In fact as the writer has already stated "God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints." (Heb 6:10-note)

On the other hand the writer reminds us that "there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13-note).

And for those who reject Jesus' sacrifice and insult His Spirit of grace there remains no hope but instead "**aterrifying expectation of judgment** and **THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES** (Hebrews 10:27-note)... "For we know Him Who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:30, 31-note).

By faith we see God the Judge of all. No longer does darkness and gloom hide Him for to faith's vision His glory is transcendent. And so these believers do not come to a literal mountain on earth but instead have been granted the privilege to enter God's holy sanctuary in heaven. Even now, by faith, we approach God in confession, praise, and prayer. We are not limited to one day of the year like Aaron and the other OT high priests on the day of atonement (Lev 16), but have access to the holiest at any time with the knowledge that we are always welcome through our Great High Priest Christ Jesus. God no longer does God warn us to "Stay at a distance" but in marked contrast, He beckons us to "Come near with confidence." Amazing grace!

Without exception, all humans must stand before God to be judged. But the glory of the gospel is that believers may stand before Him without fear, since Jesus, Who Himself is the Amen assures us "Amen, Amen, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." (John 5:24)

This relief from the fear of judgment (cp Heb 2:15) is an enormous blessing to those who know themselves to be (saved) sinners in thought, word and deed.

AND TO THE SPIRITS OF RIGHTEOUS MEN MADE PERFECT: kai pneumasi dikaion teteleiomenon (RPPMPG):

- Spirits - He 11:4,40 Eccl 12:7 1Co 13:12, 15:49,54, 2Co 5:8 Php 1:21, 22, 23, Php 3:12-21, Col 1:12 Rev 7:14, 15, 16, 16, 17
- [Hebrews 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- Hebrews 11:40 -note (apart from us they should not be made perfect)

The righteous men - As to the meaning of this phrase **Stedman** observes that "Commentators have differed over whether this describes "believers of pre-Christian days" (Bruce) or "New Testament believers" (Bengel). It likely looks back to Hebrews 11:40 and the Old Testament saints who would be made perfect "together with us." Since it is their spirits which have been made perfect and not their bodies, it suggests that these saints, who lived before the Cross, are waiting with us for the resurrection to come. Jesus spoke to the Jews of "other sheep [Gentiles] that are not of this sheep pen." "They too," he added, "will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd" (Jn 10:16). As we have already noted, when the heavenly Jerusalem comes to earth, as John

sees it in Revelation 21:2 ([see note](#)), these words will be fulfilled. Its gates are named for the twelve tribes of Israel, and its foundation stones bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ([Hebrews 12:18-24 Blessings Now Possible](#))

The OT saints, who were saved by the gospel by grace through faith just as are NT saints (see Ge 15:6, Hab 2:4, Gal 3:8) waited for centuries for the perfection we received when we trusted Christ, because that came only with Christ's death and His finished, perfecting work on the Cross, "For by one (sacrificial) offering He has **perfected** (**perfect tense** = speaks of the permanent effect of this offering) for all time those who are **sanctified** (**present tense** = being daily, continually set apart from the world and unto God, so called present tense salvation - see **Three Tenses of Salvation**). " (Hebrews 10:14-note).

The OT saints, justified by faith, they stand in spotless purity because the value of Christ's work has been imputed to their account. They await the time when the grave will yield up its ancient charges and they will receive glorified bodies, probably not at the rapture but at the end of this present church age, at the inception of the Messianic age (cp Da 12:13).

John MacArthur - The saints in heaven are awaiting their resurrection bodies, which is why the writer of Hebrews refers to them as "the spirits of the righteous made perfect" (Heb. 12:23). (MacArthur, J. 2 Corinthians. Page 166. Chicago: Moody Publishers) (See also brief exposition of See 2Corinthians 5:1-8)

The **KJV Bible Commentary** explains that "Since they are **spirits**, they are those who have died but have not yet been resurrected. Since they are just men **made perfect**, certainly they refer to the Old Testament saints who could not be made perfect before Christ's time (Hebrews 11:40-note); but now, they have been made perfect through His one sacrifice (Hebrews 10:14-note). ([Dobson, E G, Charles Feinberg, E Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson](#))

Wuest - The words "**spirits of just men made perfect**" refer to the saints in heaven. The festal character of this great company is set in sharp contrast to the somber, terrible appearance of Sinai. Thus, does the writer warn his readers not to go back to the First Testament, to Sinai, and judgment, and exhorts them to go on to the New Testament and join this vast multitude composing this festal gathering. ([Hebrews - Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

Made perfect (5048) (**teleioo** related to **teleios** from **telos** = an end, a purpose, an aim, a goal, consummate soundness, idea of being whole) means to accomplish or bring to an end or to the intended goal (telos). It means to be complete, mature, fully developed, full grown, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness or in good working order. It does not mean simply to terminate something but to carry it out to the full finish which is picked up in the translation "perfected".

Teleioo signifies the attainment of consummate soundness and includes the idea of being made whole. Interestingly the Gnostics used **teleios** of one fully initiated into their mysteries and that may have been why Paul used teleios in this epistle.

In He 12:2 (see note) Jesus is designated as "the author and perfecter of faith" where perfecter is teleiotes, the Completer, the One Who reached the goal so as to win the prize so to speak.

How are **the spirits of righteous men made perfect**? They have, like the Author of their faith, finished their earthly race and attained the goal (and their reward.) (Philippians 3:14-note) Brought to the goal, to perfection (Hebrews 5:9-note). The "goal" of our earthly life is to finish this present life's race with grace, holding fast the faith, enduring to the end.

Wuest has this note on the NT word group (telos, teleioo, teleios, teleiosis, teleiotes) -**Teleios** the adjective, and **teleioo** the verb. The adjective is used in the papyri, of heirs being of age, of women who have attained maturity, of full-grown cocks, of acacia trees in good condition, of a complete lampstand, of something in good working order or condition. To summarize; the meaning of the adjective includes the ideas of full-growth, maturity, workability, soundness, and completeness. The verb refers to the act of bringing the person or thing to any one of the aforementioned conditions. When applied to a Christian, the word refers to one that is spiritually mature, complete, well-rounded in his Christian character.

Richards commenting on the word group (telos, teleioo, teleios, teleiosis, teleiotes) writes that "These words emphasize wholeness and completeness. In the biological sense they mean "mature," or "full grown": the person, animal, or plant achieved the potential inherent in its nature. The perfect is the thing or person that is complete, in which nothing that belongs to its essence has been left out. It is perfect because every potential it possesses has been realized. ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Telioo is used 19 times of 24 total NT uses in Hebrews, often in the sense of to make perfect or fully cleanse from sin in contrast to ceremonial (Levitical) cleansing. The writer is emphasizing the importance of **perfection**... (which should cause any Jew who is contemplating the worth of Christ and the New Covenant to realize his utter hopelessness to every attain perfection under the Old Covenant).

Hebrews 2:10 (note) For it was fitting for Him, for Whom are all things, and through Whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to **perfect** the author of their salvation through sufferings. (**Comment**: This does

not imply any moral imperfection in the Lord Jesus, but speaks of the consummation of the human experience of suffering the death of the Cross, through which He must pass if He is to become the Author or Captain of our salvation.)

Hebrews 5:9 (note) And **having been made perfect**, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

Hebrews 7:19 (note) (for the Law **made** nothing **perfect**), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. (**Comment:** This means to carry through completely, to make complete, to finish, bring to an end. The old covenant could bring nothing to conclusion. The Mosaic economy could reveal sin but it could never remove sin, and so it had to be removed. It gave no security. It gave no peace. A man never had a clean conscience.)

Hebrews 7:28 (note) For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, **made perfect** forever.

Hebrews 9:9 (note) which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot **make** the worshiper **perfect** in conscience,

Hebrews 10:1 (note) For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, **make perfect** those who draw near. (Contrast with Jesus in Hebrews 5:9 above. The idea in Hebrews 10:1 is that the ceremonial law could not actually save the believer. Its work was always short of completeness.)

Hebrews 10:14 (note) For by one offering He has **perfected** for all time those who are sanctified. (**Comment:** Wuest writes "*Here, the completeness of the state of salvation of the believer is in view. Everything essential to the salvation of the individual is included in the gift of salvation which the sinner receives by faith in Messiah's sacrifice. The words "for ever" here are to be construed with "perfected." It is a permanent state of completeness in salvation to which reference is made. The words "them that are sanctified" are descriptive of the believer. He is one set apart for God*) ([ibid](#))

Hebrews 11:40 (note) because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be **made perfect**.

Hebrews 12:23 (note) (But you have come...) 23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men **made perfect**,

In sum the fundamental idea of **telioo** is the bringing of a person or thing to the goal fixed by God.

It is interesting and doubtless no mere coincidence that in the **Septuagint (LXX)** **teleioo** is translated numerous times as **consecrated** or **consecration**, especially speaking of consecration of the priests (cf Jesus our "great High Priest") (Ex 29:9, 29, 33, 35 Lev 4:5; 8:33; 16:32; 21:10; Nu 3:3). The LXX translators gave the verb **teleioo** a special sense of consecration to priestly service and this official concept stands behind the writer's use in this passage in Heb 5:9 (note). It signifies that Jesus has been fully equipped to come before God in priestly action.

Study the other 15 NT uses of **telioo** (other than the 9 in Hebrews)

Luke 2:43 and as they were returning, after **spending the full number** of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents were unaware of it,

Luke 13:32 And He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I **reach My goal**.' (**Comment:** "Today and tomorrow and the third day" means that God's timetable is unfolding for Jesus, and no king like Herod could shorten the time. When His work is accomplished or has reached its intended goal, His death and resurrection will be its perfection.)

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to **accomplish** His work. (**Comment:** Teleioo does mean just to bring to an end but to perfect it. The work He had been sent to do was finished on the Cross, and thus He cried "It is finished! [= related verb **teleo**]" John 19:30. Note that Jesus is not saying that He refrained from eating food but that the great goal of His life was not to cater to His body but rather to the will of His Father! Which do you cater to? Are you accomplishing His work in and through you? see **note** Ephesians 2:10)

John 5:36 "But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to **accomplish**, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. (**Comment:** The Old Testament testifies to the mission and ministry of Jesus precisely what God said He would do in Scripture

and what God told Jesus to do as He ministered.)

John 17:4 "I glorified Thee on the earth, having **accomplished** the work which Thou hast given Me to do.

Comment: Jesus had finished His work of teaching and witness, but His work of redemption had yet to be accomplished on the cross. He would then shout the great victory cry: "It is finished!" John 19:30

J C Ryle explains how the Cross accomplished God's perfect will "*The crucifixion brought glory to the Father. It glorified His wisdom, faithfulness, holiness, and love. It showed Him wise, in providing a plan whereby He could be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly.—It showed Him faithful in keeping His promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.—It showed Him holy, in requiring His law's demands to be satisfied by our great Substitute.—It showed Him loving, in providing such a Mediator, such a Redeemer, and such a Friend for sinful man as His co-eternal Son.*"

John 17:23 I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be **perfected** in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me. (**Comment:** "In unity" is literally "unto oneness" and represents the goal of the perfecting action, that goal being believers might be in a state of having achieved the unity intended for them; one which reflects the unity between the Father and the Son)

John 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished (related verb **teleo**), in order that the Scripture **might be fulfilled** (**teleioo**), said, "I am thirsty." (**Comment:** Here Scripture "reaches it's goal" or is fulfilled in Jesus.)

Acts 20:24 "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may **finish** my course (dromos = race, the course of one's life), and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

2 Corinthians 12:9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient (IS = It already is - we don't need to ask Him for more. We need to abide in the sufficiency of what He has already provided) for you, for power is **perfected** in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Philippians 3:12 (note) Not that I have already obtained it, or **have** already **become perfect** (**perfect tense**) (reached my goal, accomplished), but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

Comment: He was not yet perfectly conformed to Christ. The process was still going on. Note that **perfect tense** speaks of an action that was completed in past time, having results that exist in present time. The past completed action of **teleioo** would refer to the work of the Holy Spirit bringing the saint to that place of spiritual maturity in which the sanctifying process would have done its work so well that nothing needed to be added. In other words, the saint would be brought to a place of absolute spiritual maturity beyond which there is no room for growth and the results of this work would be permanent, and there would be no possibility of slipping back into a state of spiritual immaturity again. Obviously this perfection will only be fully achieved when we are glorified.

James 2:22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was **perfected**;

1 John 2:5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been **perfected**. By this we know that we are in Him:

1 John 4:12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is **perfected** in us. (**Comment:** Wuest writes that "If saints have this agape love habitually for one another, that shows that this love which God is in His nature, has accomplished its purpose in their lives. It has made us loving and self-sacrificial in our characters. This love has been brought to its human fulness in the lives of the saints. The verb "is perfected" is perfect in tense, speaking of a past completed act having present results.) ([ibid](#))

1 John 4:17 By this, love is **perfected** with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not **perfected** in love.

vanish from the earth, were sore at heart. What a contrast was presented by the bare room in which they celebrated the simple supper and the splendid Temple with its magnificent rites! What a tiny rill their hymns were, compared with the mighty torrent of Temple psalmody! What a handful of worshippers, compared with the multitudes that congregated from all the world! Sometimes it seemed as though the contrast were unbearable.

Then said the Holy Ghost, lift up your eyes and see. Ye are not the lonely, isolated handful ye suppose. Every time you offer your prayer and sing your hymns ye are joining with the spirits of the perfected just, with numberless holy angels, and with vast multitudes in heaven and on earth who are ever adoring Christ. You climb the temple of Worship, of which the steps are prayers and the gates praise, and as you do so, on either hand go myriads of happy and holy spirits; and those surely are specially near whom you "have loved long since and lost awhile."

What special blessing these thoughts will bring to the bedridden, who for many years have not entered the courts of God's house; to the aged, and lonely, and exiled! We never worship God alone. As soon as we begin to pray, we say, Our Father which art in heaven, forgive our sins; give us our daily bread. We need not die to pass within thy gates,

O Jerusalem, city of God! Already we tread thy golden pavement, and hear the music of the waters of life, and press to our wounds the leaves of thy tree. (Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily)

Hebrews 12:22-23 - Invisible Companions - One Sunday morning while traveling in West Virginia, we visited a small church in a tiny village. Only 15 people were present, yet they radiated joy as they sang. And the pastor preached from the Bible with enthusiasm. But I couldn't shake a feeling of sympathy for him and his people. With little chance for growth, it looked like a discouraging ministry.

But the testimony of a young seminarian showed me how wrong I was! Assigned to minister in a small village chapel, he was dismayed when only two people stayed for the communion service. As he read from the liturgy, he came to the words: "Therefore, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we worship and adore Thy glorious name." That sentence changed everything for him. In his heart he said, "God forgive me. I did not know I was in that great company."

When we came to Christ in faith, we joined an invisible host of companions, what the writer of Hebrews says is an "innumerable company of angels," and "the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (He 12:22, 23). Keep this amazing reality in mind as you worship God. It will give great meaning to every service, whether thousands of fellow worshippers are present, or just two or three. — Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Glory to God, and praise and love
Be ever, ever given
By saints below and saints above,
The church in earth and heaven. —Wesley

When Christians worship here on earth, the hosts of heaven are worshipping with them.

Hebrews 12:22-24 - OUR HERITAGE AND OUR GOAL - WE ARE far from being perfect. When in our deepest moments, we ascend into the Holiest, on the wings of faith and prayer, we pass through a vast host of sympathetic spirits, all of whom are devoted to the same Lord and Master, and are joining in the same act of worship. Many of them have known and helped us in our earthly life, and they have been sent forth to minister to us, and to help us on our way. "Ye are come to the spirits of just men made perfect."

We are also come unto God, the Judge of all. When Moses stood before God on the Mount, he said: "I exceedingly fear and quake." But we may come with boldness to the footstool of the Eternal Throne, though our God is a consuming fire, for in Christ Jesus we stand accepted. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and His Blood speaks better things than that of Abel. That blood cried against Cain. But the Blood of Jesus cries on our behalf; it has opened the way into the Holiest; has cleansed us from our sins; has ratified the New Covenant, and is the Pledge of our redemption.

Therefore, although we realise our sinfulness and imperfection, let us arise into the unseen, and join with the One Church of the Redeemed in heaven and on earth. We are come to it in the purpose of God, and by the all-sufficing work of Christ our Lord, but let us see to it that we come also in our spiritual realization, communion, and fellowship.

We are members of the Church Universal, citizens of the Heavenly City. Heirs of that precious Redemption, which has severed us from things that are seen, and made us part of that blessed throng that no man can number—"the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven." Neither life, nor death, nor rite, nor church-order, can divide those who are for ever one with each other because they are one with Christ. Nothing but sin and obtuseness of soul can exclude us from living fellowship with saints of all communions and sects, denominations and ages.

PRAYER - Accept our thanks, O God, for this foretaste of the bliss of Paradise. To Thee we would pour forth our tribute of adoring love, and join with angels and the spirits of the Redeemed in worship. Unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, be blessing and honour, glory and dominion, for ever. AMEN. (F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk)

Hebrews 12:22-23 - Born Here! - For many years, a popular bumper sticker in Colorado bore a single word—NATIVE. It proclaimed to every new arrival, "You just moved in, but I was born here. This is my state, my heritage, and I belong."

Our nationality, citizenship, and sense of belonging are usually determined by birth. This was especially true for the Israelites in Old Testament times. They were not only the people of Israel but the people of God.

It may seem surprising, then, to read in Psalm 87 that people of rival Gentile nations will one day be treated as if they had been "born" in Zion (Ps 87:4, 5). Herbert Lockyer says of this passage:

"Whether some were born in Egypt or came from Ethiopia, all [will be] equally honored as home-born sons of the city of God. The proud from Egypt, the worldly from Babylon, the wrathful from Philistia, the covetous from Tyre [will be] brought under the regenerating, transforming power of the Spirit of God."

That is, they will be spiritually reborn.

Through faith in Jesus, we too are born again (John 3:1-18). We are now citizens of "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," and our names are "registered in heaven" (Hebrews 12:22, 23). Praise God! We have been born into His family with all of the accompanying privileges! —D C McCasland ([lbid](#))

What a blessing to be born again!
To be made new, set free from sin;
What a prospect, to live in heaven,
As God's own child, cleansed and forgiven! —Fitzhugh

Jesus was born to die, so we could be born again.

Hebrews 12:22-24 - The Church Indestructible - The chief executive of a large and successful chain of stores made a striking statement about the future of his company. He said that a hundred years from now it would be either greatly changed or nonexistent.

The same can be said about every human organization. Leaders come and go, consumer desires change, manufacturing methods evolve. As a result, companies either change or they don't survive.

According to Jesus, this will never happen to His church. Some individual churches may go out of existence, but the "gates of Hades" will never prevail against the church that Jesus is building. When He referred to "My church" (Matthew 16:18), He had in mind all believers—past, present, and future. Paul called this vast group the "body of Christ" (1Corinthians 12:27).

The moment we trust in Jesus, we become members of His body, the church. And when Jesus used the phrase "the gates of Hades," He was referring to death, for Hades is the abode of the dead. One by one believers die and pass through those "gates," but this neither changes nor diminishes the church. They simply join those who are already victors in the "heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22, 23, 24).

Praise God, the church is indestructible! —Herbert Vander Lugt ([lbid](#))

Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and cornerstone;
Chosen of the Lord and precious,
Binding all the church in one. —Neale

The Church, rooted by God, can never be uprooted by man.

Hebrews 12:23 - Morning and evening : Daily readings (May 15 PM) - Recollect that there are two kinds of perfection which the Christian needs—the perfection of justification in the person of Jesus, and the perfection of sanctification wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. At present, corruption yet remains even in the breasts of the regenerate—experience soon teaches us this. Within us are still lusts and evil imaginations. But I rejoice to know that the day is coming when God shall finish the work which he has begun; and he shall present my soul, not only perfect in Christ, but perfect through the Spirit, without spot or blemish, or any such thing. Can it be

true that this poor sinful heart of mine is to become holy even as God is holy? Can it be that this spirit, which often cries, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this sin and death?" shall get rid of sin and death—that I shall have no evil things to vex my ears, and no unholy thoughts to disturb my peace? Oh, happy hour! may it be hastened! When I cross the Jordan, the work of sanctification will be finished; but not till that moment shall I even claim perfection in myself. Then my spirit shall have its last baptism in the Holy Spirit's fire. Methinks I long to die to receive that last and final purification which shall usher me into heaven. Not an angel more pure than I shall be, for I shall be able to say, in a double sense, "I am clean," through Jesus' blood, and through the Spirit's work. Oh, how should we extol the power of the Holy Ghost in thus making us fit to stand before our Father in heaven! Yet let not the hope of perfection hereafter make us content with imperfection now. If it does this, our hope cannot be genuine; for a good hope is a purifying thing, even now. The work of grace must be abiding in us now or it cannot be perfected then. Let us pray to "be filled with the Spirit," that we may bring forth increasingly the fruits of righteousness. (Spurgeon, C. H.)

Hebrews 12:24 and to [Jesus](#), the [mediator](#) of a [new covenant](#), and to the [sprinkled blood](#), which [speaks better than](#) the blood of [Abel](#). ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [kai diathekes neas mesite lesou, kai aimati rantismou kreitton lalounti](#) ([PAPNSD](#)) [para ton Abel](#).

Amplified: And to Jesus, the Mediator (Go-between, Agent) of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood which speaks [of mercy], a better and nobler and more gracious message than the blood of Abel [which cried out for vengeance]. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: and to Jesus, mediator of a new agreement, to the cleansing of blood which tells a better story than the age-old sacrifice of Abel.

Wuest: and to Jesus, the mediator of a new testament, and to blood of sprinkling which speaks better things than the blood of Abel [i.e., the animal blood which he shed sacrificially].

Young's Literal: and to a mediator of a new covenant -- Jesus, and to blood of sprinkling, speaking better things than that of Abel!

AND TO JESUS THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT: kai diathekes neas mesite lesou

- **Jesus** - He 7:22, 8:6,8, 1Ti 2:5
- **New** - Heb 13:20, Isa 55:3 Jer 31:31, 32, 33
- **Covenant** - He 9:15 Mt 26:28 Mk 14:24 Lk 22:20
- [Hebrews 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JESUS OUR MEDIATOR

Spurgeon - The center around which we gather in these days is not Sinai with its thunder and its fire; it is the cross—no, it is heaven. It is the enthroned Savior. It is the great Mediator of a better covenant than that of which Moses came to speak. We gather there, and we make up a part of that vast throng that now surrounds that center. Oh, that we while we hear the sweet voice of the gospel we may lend it a willing ear, and may we not be among the number of those who reject the voice that speaks from heaven to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We see the **New Covenant** alluded to in many OT passages as for example in Isaiah - "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make (cut = **karath**) an **everlasting (olam) covenant (berit/berith/beriyth)** with you, [According to] the faithful mercies shown to David." (Isaiah 55:3)

Comment: "The faithful mercies shown to David" refers to the covenant God made with David in 2Sa 7:12-16 in which He promised that David's throne, dynasty, and kingdom would continue forever. Christ's resurrection confirms Him as the eternal Davidic king [Acts 13:34], though He will not take possession of that kingdom until He returns as **King of kings and Lord of lords** [Rev 19:11-16-[note](#)]. It should however be noted that some

writers see this reference to David is an allusion to the New Covenant made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah in Jer. 31:31; 32:40). See discussion entitled **Prophetic Promises of the New Covenant** for more discussion of the New Covenant in the Old Testament!

Jesus is the Mediator of a New Covenant- This is the third time the writer mentions this truth, which is clearly one he desires his readers to understand.

In Hebrews 8 the writer contrasts the Old Covenant - "But (contrasting Heb 8:1-5-note) now He (Jesus) has obtained a more excellent ministry (more excellent than the OT shadows, mere copies of the true, more excellent than the Aaronic priesthood), by as much as He is also the **mediator** of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises." (Heb 8:6-note)

In Hebrews 9 Jesus is called the Mediator of a new covenant - "And for this reason (What reason? Because Christ has appeared as our High Priest Who entered "through the greater and more perfect tabernacle...through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all" Heb 9:11-12-note) He is the **mediator** of a new covenant, in order that (**term of purpose**) since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant (cp Ro 3:25-note), those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." (Heb 9:15-note)

Mediator (3316) (**mesites** from **mesos** = middle, in midst) describes who stands in the middle between two people and brings them together. The covenant Christ mediates is a **better covenant**, since it is enacted on **better promises**. In Hebrews 8:6-13, the New Covenant is contrasted with the first covenant (Heb 8:7-note), the Mosaic Law (Ex 19:5). Christ's blood is the basis of the New Covenant and pays for the sins of all (Mt 26:28). Christians are ministers of the New Covenant (2Cor 3:6-note). There will be an aspect of fulfillment in relation to Israel in the Millennium. Remember that the New Covenant was first given in the Old Testament to Israel, **not** to the Gentiles and **not** to the Church. God declares...

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a **new covenant** with the **house of Israel** and with the **house of Judah** (if one reads this verse literally, clearly the New Covenant is first made to Israel and Judah), 32 not like the covenant which I made with their (the Jewish) fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (the first covenant = Mosaic covenant), My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel **after those days**," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them (Israel) and on their (Israel's) heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (**When will these promises be fulfilled?** See discussion of Ro 11:26-notes where Paul teaches that all Israel will be saved)

35 Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name:

36 "If this fixed order (Sun, moon, stars) departs from before Me," declares the LORD, "Then the offspring of Israel also shall cease From being a nation before Me forever." (This verse substantiates the certainty of God's promises to Israel. The church has not replaced Israel. The sun, moon, and stars are still in their order, thus God's promises stand in effect.)

37 Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured, And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done," declares the LORD.

38 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. (see Jer. 31:31-34).

In first Timothy **Paul** writes that "there is one God, and one **mediator** also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1Timothy 2:5)

New (3501)(**neos**) signifies new **in respect to time** (contrast **kainos** = new in respect to quality - the "New Covenant" is both!). **Neos** describes that which has recently come into existence but for a relatively short time. This temporarily and qualitatively new covenant is a better covenant of which Jesus is the Guarantee and Mediator, the writer explaining that...

(Jesus as a Priest forever) so much the more (than the Levitical priests) also Jesus has become the guarantee of a **better covenant**. (Hebrews 7:22-note)

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better covenant**, which has been enacted on better promises. (Hebrews 8:6-note)

And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the

redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (Hebrews 9:15-note)

Covenant (1242) (diatheke [word study] from **dia** = two + **tithemi** = to place pictures that which is placed between two Thus, a covenant is something placed between two, an arrangement between two parties.) was a commonly used in the Greco-Roman world to define a legal transaction in settling an inheritance.

Diatheke denotes an irrevocable decision, which cannot be cancelled by anyone. A prerequisite of its effectiveness before the law is the death of the disposer and thus **diatheke** was like a "final will and testament". In reference to the divine covenants, such as the Abrahamic covenant, diatheke is not a covenant in the sense that God came to agreement or compromise with fallen man as if signing a contract. Rather, it involves declaration of God's unconditional promise to make Abraham and his seed the recipients of certain blessings.

AND TO THE SPRINKLED BLOOD WHICH SPEAKS BETTER THAN THE BLOOD OF ABEL: kai haimati rhantismou kreitton lalounti (PAPNSD) para ton abel:

- **Blood** - He 9:21, 10:22, 11:28, Ex 24:8 1Pe 1:2
- **Speaks** He 11:4 Ge 4:10 Mt 23:35 Lk 11:51
- [Hebrews 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Sprinkled blood - is mentioned in the Old and the New Testaments, where we read that...

Moses took the blood and **sprinkled** it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD (**Exodus 24:8**) (He 9:19; 20; 21; 22-See **notes** He 9:19; 20; 21; 22)

(And in the NT Peter describes those who are "aliens...chosen") according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be **sprinkled** with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure. (1Pe 1:2-note)

Longman - "**The sprinkled blood**" is hardly another component in the festive assembly but rather an extension of the description of Jesus' role as mediator, and one that further underlines the contrast with Sinai, where the old covenant was ratified in sprinkled blood (Ex 24:8). The reason Christ's people are able to be on Mount Zion is that blood has again been shed (see esp. Heb 9:15–22), fulfilling the model of the ceremonial "sprinklings" of blood in the OT (Heb 9:13, 19, 21). But not all bloodshed is beneficial, as we are reminded by a further reference to the first bloodshed of the Bible (cf. Heb 11:4). Abel's blood cried out with a message of condemnation (Ge 4:10), but the message of Jesus' blood is far "better" (the last use of this pregnant term in Hebrews). (Ibid)

Spurgeon - The text does not merely speak of the shed blood, but of "the sprinkled blood." This is the atonement applied for divine purposes, and specially applied to our own hearts and consciences by faith. For the explanation of this sprinkling we must look to the types of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament the blood of sprinkling meant a great many things; we meet with it in the book of Exodus, at the time when the Lord smote all the firstborn of Egypt. Then the blood of sprinkling meant preservation. The sprinkled blood very frequently signified the confirmation of a covenant. So it is used in Exodus 24: the blood was sprinkled upon the book of the covenant, and also upon the people, to show that the covenant was, as far as it could be, confirmed by the people who promised, "All that the Lord has said we will do." In many cases the sprinkling of the blood meant purification. If a person had been defiled, he could not come into the sanctuary of God without being sprinkled with blood. There were the ashes of a red heifer laid up, and these were mixed with blood and water; and by their being sprinkled on the unclean, his ceremonial defilement was removed. The sprinkling of the blood meant, also, sanctification. Before a man entered upon the priesthood the blood was put upon his right ear, and on the great toe of his right foot, and on the thumb of his right hand, signifying that all his powers were thus consecrated to God. The ordination ceremony included the sprinkling of blood upon the altar all around. Even thus has the Lord Jesus redeemed us unto God by His death, and the sprinkling of His blood has made us kings and priests unto God forever. One other signification of the blood of the sacrifice was acceptance and access. When the high priest went into the most holy place once a year, it was not without blood, which he sprinkled on the ark of the covenant and on the mercy seat, which was on top of it. All approaches to God were made by blood. There was no hope of a man drawing near to God, even in symbol, apart from the sprinkling of the blood. And now today our only way to God is by the precious sacrifice of Christ. The only hope for the success of our prayers, the acceptance of our praises, or the reception of our holy works, is through the ever-abiding merit of the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost bids us enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; there is no other way.

Wuest comments that the best action for the readers is "if they place their faith in Messiah as High Priest, come to Jesus, the mediator of the New Testament. They come also to the **blood of sprinkling**, Jesus' blood, which speaks better things than the

blood of the sacrificial animal which Abel offered. It is not Abel's own blood which is compared here with Jesus' blood, for the historical background and the analysis of the book show that the purpose of the writer is to prove that Jesus' blood of the New Testament is better than and takes the place of the animal blood shed under the First Testament. Our exegesis of this verse, therefore, is in line with the analysis of the letter. Again, the writer confronts his readers with the superiority of Jesus' blood as over against that of the Levitical sacrifices. ([Hebrews - Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

Speaks - Don't miss the **present tense** which pictures the sprinkled blood of Christ as continually speaking.

Better than the blood of Abel - (Note "the blood" is added by translators) This phrase can be taken two ways, and from a brief survey of commentaries, most prefer the interpretation that this blood was Abel's literal blood, rather than the blood of the animal which he offered for a sacrifice. Notice that the translations above (Amplified, NLT) favor the former interpretation (which is another reason one needs to be a Berean even when reading respected translations - it is virtually impossible to completely remove all traces of bias! Just another reason to encourage the diligent exegete to go directly to the original languages!).

While most sources seem to favor this as a reference to the literal blood of Abel, there is certainly support for this blood referring to the blood of animals. The sprinkling of Jesus' blood was to be sure His own literal blood, but in other references in Hebrews the efficacy of His blood is directly contrasted with the blood of animal sacrifices. In this context (in line with the author's train of thought) it would be very reasonable to interpret the **blood of Abel** as the blood which he offered to God in the form of animal sacrifices.

In Hebrews 11 we read that Abel's sacrifice was pleasing to God because it was offered in faith and obedience...

By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks (Hebrews 11:4-note) (Note the repetition of the key idea **faith!**) (To be sure "he still speaks" is a reference to Genesis 4:10 where God says to Cain "brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground" and this might lead one to favor that the reference to the **blood of Abel** in Hebrews 12:24 is his own literal blood. But clearly this verse also refers to Abel's **better sacrifice**, which from Genesis 4:4 ["of the firstlings of his flock"] clearly refers to animal sacrifice and therefore to the blood of an animal. This comparison of Scripture with Scripture would leave open the interpretation of the **blood of Abel** in Hebrews 12:24 as a reference to animal blood rather than Abel's blood. Notice also that Abel's **better sacrifice** was not **better** because it was an animal sacrifice instead of fruit from "the fruit of the ground" [Genesis 4:3]. It was **better** because of condition of the "sacrificer" [by faith], not because of the specific type of sacrifice. God has always been more interested in the internal than the external. Man on the other hand in his fallen condition gravitates towards the external rather than the internal!)

Although the word **blood** is not mentioned, as mentioned above Genesis 4 teaches that Abel offered an animal sacrifice, Moses recording...

And Abel, on his part also brought of **the firstlings of his flock** and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; (Genesis 4:4)

Throughout this epistle the writer has been arguing from Scripture that the New Covenant is a better covenant for it has better promises, a better sacrifice, better blood, and a better High Priest. He is trying to demonstrate to these "wavering Jewish believers" (undoubtedly including some who were only professors) who were being tempted to go back to the old system, that the new covenant was better. Remember that this temptation to return to the familiar rituals of the Old Testament sacrificial system would undoubtedly have been an ever present temptation because at the time of this epistle, the OT sacrifices were being performed in the Temple. It would have been tempting for these Jews to walk by sight rather than by faith. Given this historical background and the flow of the argument in this epistle, the **blood of Abel** could very reasonably be interpreted as a reference to the blood that Abel offered when he killed the sacrificial animal.

For example, notice the writer's strong emphasis on Christ's blood as better than that of animals - "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation and not through the **blood of goats and calves**, but through **His own blood**, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the **blood** of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, **how much more will the blood of Christ**, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (He 9:11; 12; 13; 14-See **notes** He 9:11; 12; 13; 14)

John MacArthur favors the interpretation that the blood of Abel is a reference to his animal sacrifice writing that "The sprinkled blood of Jesus far surpasses the sacrifice of Abel (Heb. 11:4) and speaks better than the blood of Abel. Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God because it was offered in faith, but it had no atoning power—not even for Abel, much less for anyone else. Jesus' blood, however, was sufficient to cleanse the sins of all men for all time, to make peace with God for whoever trusts in that blood

sacrifice (see note Colossians 1:20). ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

Guzik - The **blood of Abel** does not mean the blood he shed in his martyrdom. Rather, it was the blood of the sacrifice he made - the first recorded sacrifice from man to God in the Bible. The blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of animal sacrifice, the blood of Abel. ([Hebrews 12](#))

The **UBS** note makes reference to Abel's literal blood (as crying out for vengeance) but also mentions the other possible interpretation as referring to the blood of an animal stating that in this latter interpretation "the main reference would be to Abel's sacrifice, offered in faith, though his murder, considered as a "sacrifice" of himself, would not be excluded. ([United Bible Societies](#))

William MacDonald - His (Christ's) precious blood is contrasted with the blood of Abel. Whether we understand the latter as meaning the blood of Abel's sacrifice or Abel's own blood which was shed by Cain, **it is still true that Christ's blood speaks more graciously**. The blood of Abel's sacrifice said, "Covered temporarily"; Christ's blood says, "Forgiven forever." Abel's own blood cried, "Vengeance"; Christ's blood cries, "Mercy, pardon, and peace." (Bolding added) ([Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

J Vernon McGee (As do [John Calvin](#), [Thomas Constable](#),) clearly favors the **blood of Abel** as referring to Abel's literal blood "Abel's blood cried for vengeance, but the blood of Christ speaks of salvation."

Spurgeon - Abel stands forth before us as the first in a cloud of witnesses, bearing brave testimony, and prepared to seal it with their lives. He died a martyr for the truth—the grandly Godlike truth that God accepts men according to their faith. All honor to the martyr's blood that speaks so effectually for precious truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ, being also a testifier and witness for the faith of God, spoke better things than Abel, because He had more to speak, and spoke from more intimate acquaintance with God. He was a fuller witness of divine truth than Abel could be, for He brought life and immortality to light (2 Tim 1:10), and told His people clearly of the Father. Abel brought but the type and the figure: the lamb, which was but a picture of the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world; but Christ was that Lamb. He was the substance of the shadow—the reality of the type. Abel's sacrifice had no merit in it apart from the faith in the Messiah with which he presented it. But Christ's sacrifice had merit of itself; it was in itself meritorious. What was the blood of Abel's lamb? It was nothing but the blood of a common lamb that might have been shed anywhere. If he had not had faith in Christ, the blood of the lamb would have been as water—a contemptible thing. But the blood of Christ was a sacrifice indeed, far richer than all the blood of beasts that ever were offered.

Stedman favors that the **blood of Abel** refers to Abel's literal blood explaining that "Moses was the mediator of the old covenant and under it, the Aaronic priests sprinkled blood upon the mercy seat to cover over the sins of Israel. This made the continued presence of God among them possible. As our author has ably shown, all this was but a shadow of the new covenant where Jesus would be an eternal mediator, sprinkling His own blood which does not merely cover over sins but takes them entirely away. The better word of which his blood speaks is forgiveness, whole and complete. This is in contrast to the blood of Abel, which, as we saw earlier, could only call for vindication but could not offer forgiveness. Let us never forget that we are redeemed, not with perishable things such as silver or gold "but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1Pe 1:19-note). ([Hebrews Commentary](#))

Abel - Jesus' commentary on **Abel** in Mt 23:35 clearly refers to the literal **blood of Abel** for as our Lord said to the Jewish multitudes and His disciples...

"Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from **the blood of righteous Abel** to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. (Mt 23:34, 35)

This declaration would certainly justify interpreting the "blood of Abel" here in Hebrews 12:24 as referring to Abel's literal blood.

Clearly Abel was justified (declared righteous) by grace through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ (see the **Protevangelium**, or "first giving of the good news" by God in Genesis 3:15)

And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

So Abel had heard the gospel in some form (we know from Galatians 3:8 the gospel was presented to Abraham) and responded to the good news in faith ("*By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous*" - Hebrews 11:4-note) in contrast to Cain who responded in works and disobedience (and rebellion).

Abel's sacrifice (either of his own blood or that of the animal's he sacrificed [depending on which interpretation one favors]) clearly had no atoning power per se.

Interpreting Hebrews 12:24 as a reference to Abel's murder, one can say that Abel was slain but he still speaks (Mt 23:35, Hebrews

11:4-note). Abel's own shed blood cried out to the Lord for justice and judgment, but Jesus' blood procures redemption and forgiveness, something better than Abel's blood. Moses writes...

(God to Cain) And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your (Abel's)**brother's blood** is crying to Me from the ground. (Ge 4:10).

Let me sum up this section on the interpretation of the phrase **the blood of Abel** with this well worded and well reasoned comment by **Jamieson**...

his comparison between two things of the same kind (namely, Christ's sacrifice, and Abel's sacrifice) is more natural, than between two things different in kind and in results (namely, Christ's sacrifice, and Abel's own blood [Alford], which was not a sacrifice at all); compare Heb 11:4; Ge 4:4.

This accords with the whole tenor of the Epistle, and of this passage in particular (Heb 12:18-22), which is to show the superiority of Christ's sacrifice and the new covenant, to the Old Testament sacrifices (of which Abel's is the first recorded; it, moreover, was testified to by God as acceptable to Him above Cain's), compare Heb 9:1-10:39.

The word **better** implies superiority to something that is good: but Abel's own blood was not at all good for the purpose for which Christ's blood was efficacious; nay, it cried for vengeance.

So Archbishop Magee, Hammond, and Knatchbull. Bengel takes "the blood of Abel" as put for all the blood shed on earth crying for vengeance, and greatly increasing the other cries raised by sin in the world; counteracted by the blood of Christ calmly speaking in heaven for us, and from heaven to us.

I prefer Magee's view. Be this as it may, to deny that Christ's atonement is truly a propitiation, overthrows Christ's priesthood, makes the sacrifices of Moses' law an unmeaning mummery, and represents Cain's sacrifice as good as that of Abel. ([Hebrews 12](#))

As an aside, it is sad that the **literal interpretation of Scripture** gave way to the **allegorical mode of interpretation** almost as soon as all the apostles were dead, this latter method becoming the predominant mode of interpretation after 100AD (For a succinct summary which gives a good historical perspective see Dr Stephen Lewis' work - [Hermeneutics - Study of Interpretation of Scriptures - recommended-interesting overview of the history of Bible interpretation - see page 22](#)).

It is little wonder, that Augustine and many other early Christian exegetes, interpreted **Cain** as symbolic of the envious "*Jews by whom Christ was slain*" while Christ Himself "*the Shepherd of the flock of men, [is] prefigured in Abel, the shepherd of the flock of sheep*". This type of far fetched interpretation has caused many to shy away from the study of valid Old Testament types (see related discussion - Typology - Study of Biblical types) Clearly Augustine's (and other's) allegorical interpretation is incorrect. What is even more tragic is that **misinterpretation** of the Word of Truth invariably leads to **misapplication**. This allegorical interpretation of Cain is an excellent case in point for it has been misapplied by some to justify their "right" to punish the Jews (cf pogroms, holocaust, etc). Such aberrant interpretations emphasize the need for Spirit taught, intellectually honest interpretation of the Word of Truth, **Inductive Bible study** being one of the best modalities to achieve this end. (See discussion of the individual facets of inductive study - Observation, [Interpretation](#), Application)

Now every blood-brought child of God can say:

The terrors of law and of God,
With me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view.
—A. M. Toplady

Hughes sums up this section beautifully writing that "As fellow-pilgrims in the great marathon, we must not veer off course toward Sinai, because Jesus has met Sinai's great demands for holiness and perfection at Calvary atop Mount Zion."

To run and work the Law commands,
Yet gives me neither feet nor hands;
But better news the Gospel brings;
It bids me fly, and gives me wings.

The Scriptures tell us that in the Church "you have come" (right now!) to these seven sublime realities:

- To the City of God,

- To myriads of angels,
- To fellow-believers,
- To God,
- To the Church Triumphant,
- To Jesus,
- To forgiveness.

If this does not create a wellspring of thanksgiving in our hearts and make us want to march to Zion, what will?
([Hughes, R. K. Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul. Volume 1. Crossway Books, Volume 2](#))

Hebrews 12:24 - Morning and evening: Daily readings (April 17 AM) - Reader, have you come to the blood of sprinkling? The question is not whether you have come to a knowledge of doctrine, or an observance of ceremonies, or to a certain form of experience, but have you come to the blood of Jesus? The blood of Jesus is the life of all vital godliness. If you have truly come to Jesus, we know how you came—the Holy Spirit sweetly brought you there. You came to the blood of sprinkling with no merits of your own. Guilty, lost, and helpless, you came to take that blood, and that blood alone, as your everlasting hope. You came to the cross of Christ, with a trembling and an aching heart; and oh! what a precious sound it was to you to hear the voice of the blood of Jesus! The dropping of his blood is as the music of heaven to the penitent sons of earth. We are full of sin, but the Saviour bids us lift our eyes to him, and as we gaze upon his streaming wounds, each drop of blood, as it falls, cries, "It is finished; I have made an end of sin; I have brought in everlasting righteousness." Oh! sweet language of the precious blood of Jesus! If you have come to that blood once, you will come to it constantly. Your life will be "Looking unto Jesus." Your whole conduct will be epitomized in this—"To whom coming." Not to whom I have come, but to whom I am always coming. If thou hast ever come to the blood of sprinkling, thou wilt feel thy need of coming to it every day. He who does not desire to wash in it every day, has never washed in it at all. The believer ever feels it to be his joy and privilege that there is still a fountain opened. Past experiences are doubtful food for Christians; a present coming to Christ alone can give us joy and comfort. This morning let us sprinkle our door-post fresh with blood, and then feast upon the Lamb, assured that the destroying angel must pass us by. (Spurgeon, C. H.)