

Access to Heaven on Earth



Hebrews 12:18-29



CONTEXT

+ We have heard of the past witnesses (Heb. 11) and the importance of running and continuing to run the race of faith (Heb. 12:1-17).

+ Today, the teacher address his congregation by the use of 4 narratives:

- 1. Explanation of the Heavenly City.**
- 2. A warning in refusing to listen to God.**
- 3. God's purpose & effect in speaking.**
- 4. Appeal to participate in Divine Service.**

THEME

Today, we hear the story of the Lord's Theophany to the congregation of Israel at Mt. Sinai to explain why the members of the church should pursue God's Holiness by listening to the Voice of Jesus as He speaks good things to you in Divine Service.



Let's Briefly Review:

The Theophany of God at Sinai
was very unique!

It was the only time that all of Israel
heard the voice of God (Dt. 4:12,
15, 33, 36; 5:4, 26).

The Theophany of God at Sinai was exceptional!

Israel hears the voice of God from a CLOUD!

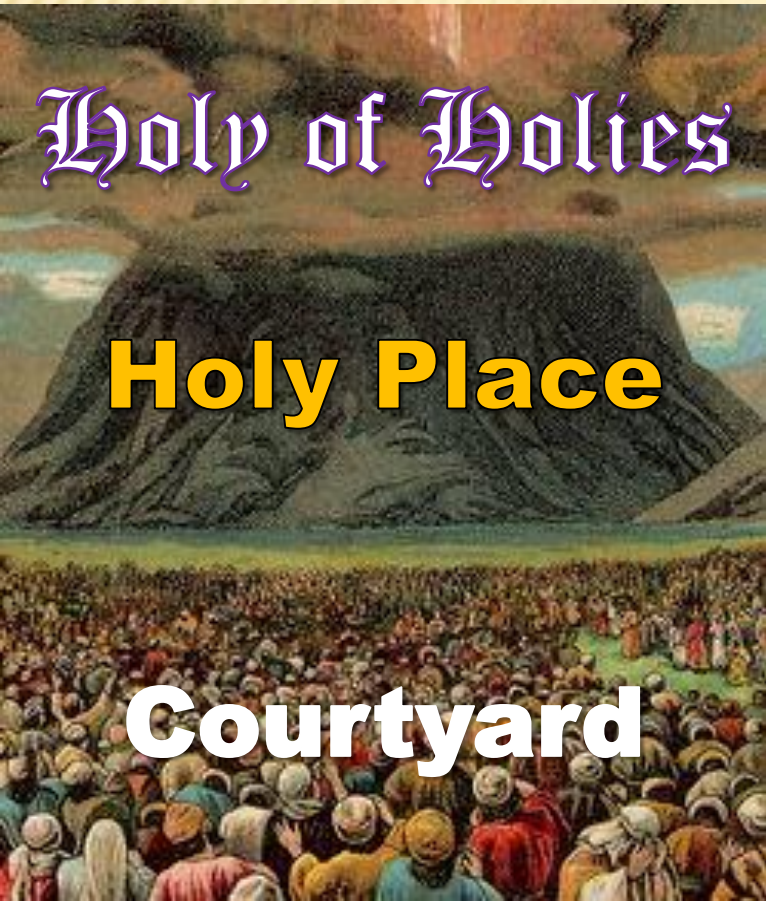
A Cloud that concealed His presence on Mt. Sinai.



The heart of this Theophany is...

God showed Himself
by Speaking to Israel!!!

¹⁸For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.



Holy of Holies

Holy Place

Courtyard

1. The Paradox...that access is forbidden to a place that was in fact physically present.

+ Refers to the whole of the Old Testament...access is limited due to sin.

+ Also limited access by Israel in worship service at the earthly sanctuary.

¹⁸For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.



2. The “burned with fire” is the Presence of God...His Holy Presence.

- + His fire burns up that which is unholy/unclean.
- + His fire also makes that which is common...holy!
- + His fire is death-dealing & life-giving; shows His wrath & conveys His blessings.

¹⁸For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.

3;4;5: “blackness”; “darkness”;
“tempest”

- + These three are at the center of the Theophany.
- + God conceals Himself visually, so that He may reveal Himself verbally.
- + Safe contact with His people on earth
- + Safe contact with no risk of desecration & destruction!



¹⁸For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.



6. "...the sound of a trumpet..."

+ The Shophar...used to announce the presence of the King or God!

+ The sound was so strong and loud that it shook the mountain.

²²But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

1. “...you have come...”! A very important statement!
 - + In the “perfect tense” which means that this place has **ALREADY** been reached!
 - + It is the place where you are now!
 - + In Mt. Zion, The City of the Living God, you have full access and permanent residence...but not yet!!!




HERE...

HEAVEN AND EARTH OVERLAP!

HERE, DEARLY BELOVED...

YOU HAVE ACCESS TO...

HEAVENLY JERUSALEM!



HERE...

**IS WHERE YOU PARTICIPATE IN
THE SEVEN HEAVENLY
REALITIES...**

- 1. Mount Zion, the City of God;**
- 2. Myriads of Angels;**
- 3. The Assembly of the Firstborn Sons;**
- 4. God the Judge;**
- 5. The Righteous...brought into Perfection;**
- 6. Jesus the Mediator;**
- 7. The Blood of Jesus (that speaks a better word than Abel).**

Heights of Transjordan

Mist in Jordan Valley

Mist over Dead Sea

Desert of Judah

Mt. of Olives

Mt. Zion

The mountain
of the Lord



The Valley"

"The Valley"

"The Va

Western Hill

Area of Herod's Palace

The Byzantine
"Mt. Zion"

Hinnom Valley

**Jerusalem from the West
(with names of ancient locations)**

Adapted from a photograph by

Garo Nalbandian

(info@garo-jerusalem.com)

Heights of Transjordan

As David founded

Mist over Dead Sea

Desert of Judah

So Jesus has founded the new Temple-City of God (Mt. 5:14);

Mt. of Olives

Our viewing point,
Day 5

Mt. Zion

The Temple of the Lord

God is its architect and builder (Heb. 11:10);

This is the city to come, the city God has prepared for the righteous.

Area of Herod's Palace

The Byzantine
"Mt. Zion"

This is the place that God resides with His people!!!


Jerusalem from the West
(with labels of ancient locations)

© 2000 a photograph by
Garo Nalbandian
(info@garo-jerusalem.com)



Thus, when you come to worship
you are joined with a “...myriad of
angels in festal gathering.”

By our Lord's incarnation and
exaltation, Jesus has united the
earthly choir with the angelic.



Also, at the beginning of each
worship service, you join “...the
assembly of the firstborn sons.”

This is the importance
of your **BAPTISM!**

Through baptism, you are
made a heir!

+ You are a FULL
citizen of the heavenly
city!!!



So as you, the congregation at
SSLC, sing the praises of the Lord,
joining with you are the angels!!

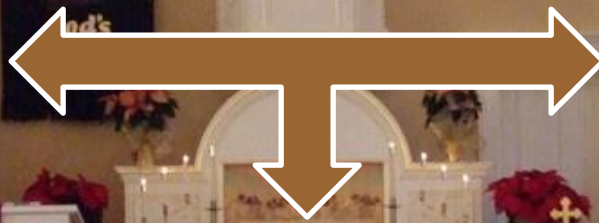
**During Divine Service, you come into
the presence of the Divine Judge!**

**This is actually a positive...
not a negative!**

**“UPON THIS YOUR CONFESSION, I, BY
VIRITUE OF MY OFFICE, AS A CALLED AND
ORDAINED SERVANT OF THE WORD,
ANNOUNCE THE GRACE OF GOD UNTO
ALL OF YOU, AND IN THE STEAD AND BY
THE COMMAND OF MY LORD JESUS
CHRIST; I FORGIVE YOU ALL YOUR SINS
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF
THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.”**

**PRESENT ARE THE "...SPIRITS OF THE
RIGHTEOUS MADE PERFECT..."**

**THEY ARE
RIGHTEOUS**



**THEY ARE
PERFECTED**

**THEY HAVE REACH THEIR GOAL AND WILL
SERVE AS APPROVED PRIEST AND ALSO
ENCOURAGE THEIR FELLOW SAINTS WHO
AWAIT THEIR
RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD!**

**IN DIVINE SERVICE, YOU, HIS SAINTS, COME
TO *"THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT,
JESUS"***

**Our Lord's blood
speaks God's grace
and blessings, His
pardon and approval**

**Here our Lord's
blood is sprinkled on
your conscience
making you clean
and holy!!!**

**Jesus now mediates the Divine Ministry as He is
present to serve you HIS Body and Blood; thusly
serving you His legacy, sanctifying you, and
strengthening your faith!"**

25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, **26** whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”

As is the usual teaching method of the Preacher, he follows his explanation of access and provision with an imperative instruction.

+ In Divine Worship, you hear the Words of your Lord Jesus Christ...words of judgment and salvation...holy words with His Blood!

25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, **26** whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”

+ You must not refuse to listen to the voice of your Lord Jesus, as did the Israelites!

27“Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.””

The key: Shake (σαλεύω): Harkens back to 26a. So that which cannot be shaken is that which stands on a solid foundation! So there are actually 5 things that cannot be shaken:

- 1. Righteous People who trust God (Pss.15, 16, 17, 112);**
- 2. The King who trust in the Lord (Ps 21);**
- 3. The Holy City of Zion (Ps 46);**
- 4. The citizen of Zion (Ps 125);**
- 5. The world in which God reigns as King (Pss. 93, 96).**

27“Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.””

Thusly, all those things listed in vv. 22-24 cannot be shaken...and will remain forever!

- 1. The new heaven and earth will remain (Is. 66:22);**
- 2. Jesus will remain a Priest forever (Heb. 7:3);**
- 3. His people have a better property that will remain forever (10:34);**
- 4. The city of God, Zion, will remain forever (13:14);**
- 5. All these remain...since His Word will remain forever (Is 40:8; 1 Pet 1:25).**

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. **29** For our God is a consuming fire.

These last two verse are the completion of the Preachers appeal to his congregation.

- + You have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken, ever!**
- + You have received royal status in His kingdom.**
- + Your receiving is an ongoing process**
- + Therefore, you are called to rightly worship in reverence and awe!**



**Your Lord is a
consuming fire
(v.29)...**

**+ ...since He is a
passionate God...
passionate about
your life and
salvation...**

**+ ...so He is then
committed to you and
to all who are loyal to
Him.**

Consuming Fire
Hebrews 12:29



**+ Finally, He is a
God of wrath, who will
not permit His people to
desecrate His Holiness...**

**+ ...and He is also a
God full of grace, whose
holiness make His people
holy!**