

Current Affairs # 35 – Should We Be Going to Church During the Coronavirus, Part 2

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In the discussion that preceded, we addressed the first issue, which is, does Hebrews 10:25 require us or give us a divine mandate to meet on Sundays. The answer is unequivocally, no. But how did we get to this place? And, why is God overturning these things now? We know from the book of Hebrews that he tells us that everything that can be shaken will be shaken. For we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken, so we are to worship God acceptably, with reverence and awe, because our God is a consuming fire (cf. Hebrews 12:27-29). Now I want to read something to you, and I want to center on this because this is what is happening now. In Hebrews 12:18, I want to read several verses, beginning at verse 18.

*For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire...  
(Hebrews 12:18 NKJV).*

He is talking about Mount Sinai, when Israel came before Mount Sinai, and God came down on the mountain. It is talking about two mountains: Mount Zion and Mount Sinai. Mount Zion is in Israel. Mount Sinai is in the Arabian desert. From Sinai, the law was given. But from Zion, grace is given. Now the contrast between these two mountains is a prophetic similitude. In fact, it is a prophetic framework that defines the times in which we are. Let's go forward with the reading and I will come back to the mountains.

*For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore  
(Hebrews 12:18-19).*

Israel begged Moses to go up and meet with God, and they ran from the mountain and the presence of God.

*(For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow." And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.")*

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

*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, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” 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.*

*Therefore, since we are receiving [present continuous tense—in other words, you are continuing to receive] a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear [awe]. For our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:20-29, comments added in brackets).*

He tells us, in times of shaking, there is a distinction between that which cannot be shaken and that which is being shaken to be taken away. It is very important that the church understands that God is now in the process of shaking everything that can be shaken. Everything that is not a part of the Kingdom of God is being shaken to be taken out of the way. He talks, then, about Mount Sinai and the unshakeable Mount Zion. Sinai, of course, like I said, was in the desert of Arabia, and it was the situs from which the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses was given. Moses was taken up to Mount Sinai after Israel had exited Egypt, and God brought them to Mount Sinai. Moses went up and God gave him... God invited the people to come up before He gave them the law, because He meant to give them, on that mountain, that endowment of the Kingdom of Heaven that would have made them all a nation of priests, a royal priesthood and a holy nation; a thing that was always what God meant to give to His people. But when they refused because they were afraid,

they sent up an ambassador, Moses, and God dealt with Moses rather than dealing with them. He gave the law from that place.

Now the law, you see, in order to understand the law, you must walk in the spirit, because the law is an external speaking of an internal state of being. Without the understanding of the internal state of being, namely the internal state of being of God, without reference to that, the only thing that you could understand then is, “Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not.” That is why, when Jesus came, representing the coming of Mount Zion, He said, “It was said before,” and He quoted the law, “thou shall not commit adultery. But I say to you, if you look on a woman to lust after her, you have committed adultery with her in your heart already” (cf. Matthew 5:27-28). Or, “It was said you should not kill,” quoting some of the Ten Commandments, He said, “but if you hate your brother without a cause, then you are guilty of murder” (cf. Matthew 5:21-22). It speaks of lusting in the heart, committing murder in the heart, and so on, as what was behind the law. So Jesus would tell the Israelites, He would tell the Jews in His day, “You search the Scriptures because in *them* you think you have life; and yet they testify of Me. And you will not come to Me” (cf. John 5:39-40). Because those under the law, then and now, do not understand the need for the revealing of the mind of God, which was presented in a type and shadow in the form of commandments.

In the law, in the secular law, when a court meets to decide a case and certain laws are brought forth as the standard, lawyers will commonly argue about “the legislative intent.” That means, that is a question of: What were the legislators thinking when they wrote this law? Because all law is to accomplish a particular purpose, but if you take the law apart from legislative intent, you just have do’s and don’ts; and whether or not the intent of the legislature was understood and brought forth is quite another matter. This actually is what people have against lawyers. What the general population has against lawyers is that they see the application of law often in a fashion and they see the argument for the application of law often in a fashion that is arbitrary and capricious. Which means it is not related to anything, it is just that it says so right here.

But where God was concerned, what was written on tablets of stone and what was written in the book of the law had an intent behind it, and it was the intent of the Person who wrote it. So even as much as the finger of God, as it were, wrote on tablets of stone, we are sure that God’s intention was behind the force of what He said. Who could know the mind of God, then? Christ, of course.

Because Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the sent One. He is the One who comes from the Father, as the Son. Because the Father loves the Son and shows the Son what the Father is thinking, what the Father is doing. So the Son would say, “I only do what I see My Father doing” (cf. John 5:19-20). Now, is this a violation of the law? No. Whereas it is not an argument for keeping the law, it is not saying the law has no relevance. It is saying the law is the lowest threshold of understanding in the process of coming to know the mind of God. When you know God, you are not bound by that that is written; you are bound by He who controls your very thoughts. And so you live in a higher realm.

I will give you an example. What was the promise of the law to the people if they kept the law? The promise was that none of their natural circumstances would be adversely affected? What do you mean? Well, your crops will not rot in the field, rain will come on time, the locusts will not devour it, etc.; and, none of the diseases that happened to the Egyptians will happen to you; and, I will keep your enemies from overrunning you. What, then, is the purpose of the law? What was the promise if they kept the law? What was the highest order of the promise if you kept the law? The highest order was your physical circumstances would be okay. I will guard those for you.

Was there anything beyond that? Well, it said the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. It was to prevent behaviors that would have taken Israel so far down the path that other nations had gone, that there would be no remaining reference in creation to the purposes of God, such as the coming of a Messiah to redeem people back to God. But insofar as the law telling the people and the people hearing according to the law about the promised Messiah, the longer time went on, the more they forgot that it even had any reference at all to the Messiah. So much so, that when He came, they killed Him. The very ones to whom He came, killed Him. Now that is not an argument that says, had He come to the Greeks, they would have treated Him any better; they would have mocked Him. If you look at what they did with Paul on Mars Hill when he came to talk about the Unknown God, they mocked him (cf. Acts 17:22-34). So, no. It does not make the Jews worse than anybody else. In fact, with the law, the degeneracy of man following the fall was not restrained hardly at all, except that, in the law and in the conscious memory of the people, there were cultural reminders that there was this greater overarching purpose for which the Messiah would come.

So the law, at its base, is not anything more than a shadow of the good things to come. But those good things are far greater than the law ever spoke about—such as, propitiation. Under the law there was an Ark of the Covenant, a box, that contained the two tablets of stone. It contained the Book of the Law, it contained a pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, all of which were symbolic of this higher order. This Ark of the Covenant was a box made of acacia wood overlaid with beaten gold, with two cherubim who overlapped, and where their wings overlapped was called the mercy seat. That was a symbol, that was a sign, that was a type and shadow of propitiation. Which is to say that, when Christ came, He was the box that contained us in the box. God viewed the box with favor because the box was perfectly obedient to God. So everything that is in the box, namely Christ, the Ark of our covenant, is attributable to us. What is in the box is the same as, from God’s viewpoint, is the same as Christ. So whatever was given to Christ is equally attributed to us.

Now, we were meant to be a people. And so out of Christ arises that that is called Mount Zion, as opposed to Mount Sinai. The one was supposed to lead to the other, but the people had no remembrance that the law pointed to Christ and to Mount Zion. There were two mountains. One was called Mount Moriah, and it was the spot where Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac, and where the temple stood. The other mountain was called the City of David. It was where Jerusalem would ultimately sit. It was occupied originally by a king named Melchizedek, or a king whose titles were Melchizedek, who ruled there. Before it became the City of David, it was a city of the Jebusites. And the spot, the tradition of the name of that, because of its proximity to Mount Moriah, was named after the doings of Abraham in attempting to sacrifice Isaac on that spot. As the city grew, it included both places. In that place, when God provided the ram instead of the son, Abraham said, “For here, God provideth,” and he used the term, *Jehovah-Jireh*, which is “God provides” (cf. Genesis 22:14). *Jehovah* provides His own sacrifice. By the time of David, both Mount Zion and Mount Moriah were included within what is called the City of David, and it came to be known as *Jireh Shalom*, which is “The Lord God provides peace.” So, *Jireh Shalom* is Jerusalem, which is, “in this place, God provides-(*Jireh*) peace-(*shalom*),” speaking of the Kingdom of God—righteousness, peace, and joy. And it is a promise that is now being picked up in the book of Hebrews, which says, “You have come to Mount Zion, the place where God

provideth peace.” Why? Because it is the picture of the box of reconciliation between God and man.

Now Hebrews, chapter 2, spoke of the box, the propitiation. So the subject matter of Hebrews, chapter 2, moves all the way through the book to Hebrews 10:25, which says, “against the Day of the assembling.”<sup>1</sup> It is speaking about the assembling to Christ as members of His body, typified by the box of propitiation, to which we were introduced early in the sequence of thought that is the book of Hebrews. So by the time he comes to chapter 10, he is talking about a Day against which this assembling would be completed. Then, in chapter 12, where we now are, he is talking about having been actually brought to the general assembling and church of the firstborn.

Where he says, “For you have not come to the mountain,” etc. “...but you have come to Mount Zion and the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of the saints, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn,” this is the coming together of those who are of the firstborn. Here, it is talking about the total gathering up of and the final result of that which has been moved from *episunagógé* (Strong’s Greek 1997), assembling together, to the final gathering together of the *ekklésia* (Strong’s Greek 1577). It speaks of the *panéguris* (Strong’s Greek 3831) of the *ekklésia*. So if you want to know what the church is being gathered to, the *ekklésia*—not a building, for a building is not the church. Everybody knows that, but here again, people are pretending that it is something else. In *panéguris*, “pan” means all together. But in speaking of the process of gathering it all together, that is the *episunagógé*. When the finished work is, that is the *panéguris* of the *ekklésia* of the firstborn.

There is a Day by which that is to be complete, and that is the day when the testimony in the earth is between the bride and the Spirit. The witness of the two in the earth, the bride and the Spirit, is heard in heaven. That is the Day when there will be—the trumpet sound is one of the things that this speaks of. “You have come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn,” and the announcement is made as with the trumpet sound. It speaks of, “For the Day of the Lord shall come with a shout of the archangel and the trumpet of God. Then, the dead in Christ shall arise first. Then, we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so will we be with the Lord from then on” (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

So this assembling is a very necessary component. It does not just happen one day, when the angel sounds a trumpet from heaven to announce the return of the Lord. No. The work of the Holy Spirit in the earth is the assembling of the Body of Christ. And He does that from the very first time that the body was available to be assembled to. It tells us in 1 Corinthians 12, “For by one Spirit are you baptized into one body.” So the beginning of the assembling of the Body of Christ is done by the Spirit, not by the volition of people who go down to church on Sunday. There is a joining of bone to His bone. The Holy Spirit assembles the parts of this *Corpus Christi* in exactly the manner that they were designed to be assembled. So you should not forsake *that* assembling, because it is being done according to a Day, against the background of a Day when the assembling will have been complete.

In the next broadcast, I will talk about the specific assignment of parts and the assembling by the Holy Spirit, because only the Spirit of God knows how the parts fit together. Why? Because the Spirit searches the deep things of God. The Spirit searches the mind of God and finds *you*, and finds where you fit, and assembles you into that body. If you forsake that assembling, where then do you fit? What is it that God is going to save eventually? That body. If you neglect your being assembled, what is the outcome? There is no more sacrifice for sin. It is done. You have rejected that only thing that God offered. That is why the rest of what was said in Hebrews 10 was said, and not the foolishness of preachers who try to get you to come to church on Sunday during the coronavirus.

I will continue on from here.

Endnotes:

1. See Hebrews 10:24-25 NKJV: “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”