

Our Heavenly Father is Getting a “Bum Rap”

Hebrews 12:18 says “for you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness, darkness and tempest, and the sounds 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.”

And **verse 21** says that “and so terrifying was the sight that Moses said: I am exceedingly afraid and trembling”

Now that beloved was the scene set in **Exodus 20** where the children of Israel came to the mountain to hear from God concerning the commandments, He had given them.

Verse 20 says: *‘for they could not endure what was commanded and “if so, much as a beast touches the mountain, it should be stoned or shot with an arrow.”*

Beloved, this was Mount Sinai where the 10 commandments were given to Moses.

When the people heard God reiterate the commandments in person, they were terrified at what they heard. Even begging Moses to have Him stop. Telling Moses, “if He (God) has anything to say to us, let Him tell you and you tell us.” (**Exodus 20:19**)

There are several reasons why God appeared angry with them but foremost was their thought that they could keep the commandments given to Moses and then to the people through Moses.

Scripture teaches us that the commandments were given to reveal man’s heart. Not to be kept but to reveal that they could not be kept by anyone. Through the Law (commandments) is the knowledge of sin.

Paul said that what was given through the law he felt was to liberate him. Set him free. Later He found it to actually “slay him” In fact, it was his total understanding of the law that actually caused him to realize he could not keep it and thereby become a sinner and due the judgment of God.

Quoting Paul, he said “actually through his understanding of the law and how it applied to his life, he realized his inability to keep the law, and that through this law came the “knowledge of sin”.

The very thing that he thought would liberate him actually caused the opposite to happen to him. Paul said when he understood what was actually in the law and how it was to work on him, “sin revived in Him and He died – needing a savior.

You see it is not just the outward obeying of the law, but the inner desires that are also at play here. The law says; “thou shalt not covet” Ok I will not covet what my neighbor has, but more is required by the law. It is not sufficient to just not outwardly desire what my neighbor has; I can’t even desire it in my heart.

BOOM - You and I might be able to fool one another about the desires of our heart, but God looks at it differently. He knows the “thoughts and intent of our hearts” He knows what we are thinking about something. I may say “I don’t want what my neighbor has with his home, family income etc. But if I do want it, God knows it and I can’t hide my thought from Him.

Beloved, that is why it is so important for you and I not to set ourselves up for failure.

What do I mean by setting ourselves up for failure?

Beloved, because we love God (or are rather loved by God) we do not want to do anything to cause displeasure to Him. Inside of each of us is the desire to please Him in everything we do. Problem comes when we set about to deny ourselves something because we feel it is His will in our lives. Moreover, as we deny these things, many of us then set about to prove how serious we actually are about a change in us.

We say, I want to be more like Jesus. I want more of His attributes to abound in my life. Such things as unconditional love for another, a self-giving instead of a self-taking kind of attitude. A life of sacrifice for others, loving the unlovely or caring more for the needy or whatever.

Beloved, are we aware that if these attitudes abound in our lives, we needn’t say or do a thing. He knows it already. The Word of God (Jesus) is able to separate even the joints and marrow of our thoughts. The problem with most of us is that these thoughts are “fleeting” and don’t seem to dominate our thinking... We have them, and then we lose them as something else comes along.

Question for most of us at this point is – Well what do we do about it?

May I suggest that we do nothing. We just relax and enjoy whatever we are involved in at the moment. If we learn to do this, there is no stress in our lives. No “I wish I had or hadn’t done that” or I must find a way to overcome those shortcomings, or feelings or thoughts or in many cases in-actions.

Well back to the message at hand.

Why are we told that we are not coming to the Mountain of Sinai?

Because beloved it is at this mountain that judgment comes from God the Father.

They were told to do this, or do that, or don’t do this or don’t do that and they agreed with God the Father that they could stop doing wrong and start doing right.

Problem came along where they realized that they couldn’t keep His commands, and found themselves grateful for the sacrificial program He instituted to cover their misdeeds for another year.

Ever ask yourself why Moses came off the mountain with the 10 commandments AND the plans for the temple and its rituals to cleanse themselves from their sin for another

year? Why were the temple rituals necessary if He thought they could keep the commandments? Just askin....

God was angry at the very thought that they thought that they could keep these laws that He had given them. The commandments were meant to teach them of their inability to keep them and thereby their desperate need for Him in their lives at all times.

Well, what changed if we don't go to that mountain? What is so significant about Mount Zion? Was it now permissible for God's kids to pay no attention to Godly things, going about committing all manner of evil?

God the Father knowing the frailty of His creation and their compacity to sin, as well as get themselves in all manner of evil things. Took care of the problem Himself.

He didn't sweep it under the carpet. He didn't "go along to get along" with evil, He paid the necessary price to eradicate it from His people. He took our sin along with every other person's sin upon Himself and paid the price for that sin Himself.

I wrote an entire book about this subject called "whatever happened to sin".

Scripture says that the penalty for sin is death. Death does not me inhalation or the ceasing of exitance, it means separation.

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If in my heart I want to speed all of the time and could care less about the speed limit, then the limit of 45 mph only exposes my heart to me. Without the speed limit, I have yet to sin (miss the mark). I can't break what is not there.

Conversely it is true that whatever "rules" I establish to live by, only give the opportunity to miss that mark and sin.

When you see the sign "don't park here" you may not have even thought about it before, but now that the rule has so obviously been displayed, all manner of "parking here desires" seem to override your mindset.

The writer of Hebrews is reminding us (and specifically the Jews as I believe the book is written to the Jews) that we have not come to this mountain called "Siani" but we have come to Mount Zion (verse 22 of chapter 12).

A different mountain entirely.

Mount Zion is where we are now established. We are now established in His finished work, His unmovable favor and special love toward each of us personally.

Well Tom, does that mean that God is no longer concerned with sin in our lives? Does that mean that God has an appetite for our transgressions? Does that mean that we should just go out there and "to hell" with any concern over morality? Do we now join

with the crowd standing for the rights of the LGBYDQ --- same sex marriages, babies out of wedlock, with no values whatsoever.

Of course not. beloved, but something has changed in the Heart of God the Father. Where He was once concerned about the sin of His people, He set about a program whereby they could annually cleanse themselves year after year of their sin, these sacrifices offered by His people for their sin did not removed sin from them but only “covered” that sin through the sacrifice for another year.

If fact, the purpose of this annual sacrifice was to keep reminding them of their sin. Not only was the law to remind them of their sin, but the annual ritual that they went through was to keep them conscious of their sin.

So what has changed?

Throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus pleading with His disciples to actually “know the heart of the Father” by watching how He conducts Himself. Jesus said, when you see Me, you are seeing our Heavenly Father. As I bind up the wounded, heal the sick, accept the unlovely, that is actually the heart of our Father. That is what He is like. When they asked Jesus to “show them the Father” His response was “have I been with you all of this time and you ask me to show you the Father. He is like Me. You see Me, you have seen the Father. We are totally alike.

For the disciples to get this, something needed to happen. This issue of “sin” “separation” must be settled. The issue of sin needed fixing once and for all.

Well, who on earth was able to fix this?

You and I could not be involved, we are part of the problem.

God the Father, through God the Son had to care for this problem. He was the only one who could fix it.

Scripture teaches us that before man even entered the scene on this earth, God (the Trinity) had the solution for this problem.

Man was used to carry out the solution probably without even knowing it.

Peter preaching in **Acts 2** tells the Jews surrounding Him that they are the reason why Jesus was crucified. Quoting from **verse 22** – Paul said (speaking about Jesus) He was attested by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs which God the Father did through Him, (and by the way – you ’all know this to be true) – **verse 23**-“Him (Jesus) *being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God- YOU have taken by lawless hands, have crucified Him and put Him to death.*”

This was the plan of the trinity Before the foundation of the earth.

Not an afterthought as though they had to correct a problem that had occurred, but rather the actual plan from the beginning.

Man would sin, and the only remedy was for God to somehow intervene Himself into the solution. Someone within the Godhead had to “become the final sacrifice for all sin” and of course, that would be the Son – The Lord Jesus Christ.

Follow with me from the Old Testament as I review **Isaiah chapter 53**.

Speaking of the Lord Jesus – **verse 2** teaches us that He had no form of comeliness (good looks or charm or charisma) and when we see Him, we would not be physically attracted to Him, He would be despised and rejected, a man familiar with sorrow and grief, He would even be despised, and we would not esteem Him anything special.

This Man would be “smitten by God” He would be afflicted by the Father, He would be wounded for our transgressions, He would be bruised for our iniquities, the actual chastisement for our peace would be upon Him, and by the stripes on His back, we are healed.

Further – this Man (Jesus the Son) the Lord (Father) would lay on Him (Jesus) the iniquities of us all. Get this beloved, it is very, very important.

He (Jesus) was oppressed and afflicted, yet would say nothing. He would be led as a lamb to the slaughter as a sheep to its shearers, and open not His mouth -say nothing about all of this to anyone. This Man would be “cut off” from the living, taken from prison and judgment and crucified. His body would be laid in a grave with the wicked, yet there would be no deceit in His mouth.

Verse 10 says: ***It pleased the Lord*** (Father) ***to bruise Him*** (Jesus), to put Him to grief and make His soul an offering for sin. God the Father would see the labor of His soul and be satisfied because He poured out His soul unto death.

This was the prophesy to the Jews, and to all who would believe in Jesus through their testimony.

Now I find it fascinating that in **chapter 54** of the Book of Isaiah. Father then having cared for the issue of their sin, through the acts of His Son Jesus, sets about to encourage these folks in their relationship with Him (The Father)

Father then tells them starting in **verse 5**, He is their Maker (God the Father) is your Husband, the Lord of Hosts is His Name. and your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, He is called the God of this whole earth.

Having cared for their issue of sin Himself, He (Father) is now prepared to lavish His love, His affection, His attention on His people. He will use great mercies to gather them unto Himself, and with everlasting kindness, He says – I will have mercy on you, and He then proclaims starting in **verse 9** that He will not be angry with them, will not rebuke them, and his loving kindness will not depart from them. Neither will His covenant of peace be removed and I shall have mercy on you.

God Himself was the final sacrifice for the sin of mankind.

God the Father looked upon the sacrifice of God the Son and was satisfied with what He saw. Not covered for another year, but removed from His people.

Asking all who now fit into His kingdom to become “righteousness conscious” rather than “sin conscious”. To embrace now your righteousness, rather than your unrighteousness. To embrace your relationship as “Sons of the Living God” rather than servants that serve a higher master. To begin to see yourself as a “kingdom of priests” rather than a person saved from the “gutter”

As I read the New Testament, there seems to be only one thing that gets under Father’s skin.

That would be when you and I fail to recognize the importance of the “blood” shed by the Lord Jesus on our behalf. Or – as He has proclaimed in **Hebrews chapter 10** verse **31** where He states it is a “fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

What constitutes this fear?

Verse 29: *“of how much worse punishment, do you suppose will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace.”*

Translated – It is a fearful thing to come before Father and consider that the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus was no better than the sacrifices offered in the Old Testament of the blood of bulls and goats for the covering of sin for another year. Or just a “common thing”

We are admonished by the Apostle Paul in **2nd Corinthians 19** and following: “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation, now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God was **pleading through us**, we implore you on Christ’s behalf – **BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD.**”

Don’t view the Heavenly Father as one on the throne, and Jesus before the throne pleading on our behalf to withhold His anger at us because we are now “in Christ’

Try to grasp what was in Father’s heart as He stood by and watched His Beloved Son being crucified, and then embrace the love He has for each of us as He watched His son die. Hearing these words come from the mouth of Jesus: “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”

What went through His mind at that point? What would go through your mind if it was your son on that cross?

Habakkuk 1: 13 says that Father’s eyes are too pure to approve evil, and He could not look on wickedness with favor. God the Father turned His back on God the Son, He could not even look at Him. Jesus had actually “become sin” on mans behalf, giving His

life as a ransom for you and me. It was at this moment that Jesus became the “satisfaction for all sin in the mind of God.

I can't get my brain around such love, but I want to.

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