

## PRAYER AND PRAISE 17// 7 JULY 2020

### Reading Heb 12:18-29

This passage is all about the difference between coming to Sinai (where the 10 Commandments were given) and to Zion where God is.

Read (18-21) What was Moses' response to being at Sinai? Can you find the different things (I think 7) which caused this fear? Which was the most terrifying, so that they begged it to stop?

Read (22-24) Again there are 7 things here, describing the spiritual gathering Christians have entered by faith. Work slowly through all of them, looking for the right response here. [It may help to know that "*the church of the firstborn*" is Old Testament believers, and "*the spirits of the righteous made perfect*" is Christians who have died.]

What word did Abel's blood speak? And what about Jesus' blood? [In Genesis 4, Abel's blood cried out for punishment] So: since we haven't come to fear and terror at Sinai, but to joy in the presence of God and Jesus, does that mean we can simply relax?

Read (25-27) Can you see the first application in (25), and then two reasons which move from lesser to greater? The gospel is glorious! But for that reason it is much more serious to refuse this "speaking" (25).

Read (28-29) What are we to be thankful for? And how are we to live? The background to this verse may well be Lev 10:1-2 when Nadab & Abihu offered unauthorised fire – in other words, tried DIY worship – and were burnt up by God who is a consuming fire. Today, worship includes all of our lives (when we gather to worship, it is so we can be equipped to scatter and continue worshipping).

In our all-day, every-day worship, should we basically relax because of the gospel, or essentially take God very seriously, in gospel awe?

### Prayer Focus – using our hands

Thumb = set apart from the other fingers. Remember some of our mission partners: OM, NISCU, GAFCON and AMiE, our Partnership with St John's London Road, The North West Gospel Partnership, etc...

First Finger = pointing finger, for those nearest to us, our neighbours. Pray along your street for the different needs and opportunities there.

Middle Finger = tallest. Pray for our leaders and those in authority. Prime Minister and Cabinet. Council, Emergency Services, NHS, and other significant Cumbrian leaders, including Bishop James. Pray also for our church leadership: Andrew as Vicar, the Wardens, PCC and Staff Team, David, Judith as Treasurer, and many others.

Fourth Finger = ring finger, for our loved ones. Pray for the people closest to you: family and friends. Consider different prayers for those who do or don't know Jesus, and pray on for your witness to them.

Little Finger = yourself. It's not wrong to pray for ourselves! What spiritual provision do you need, or what change of heart and mind? What has our Father been teaching you on Sundays and through Prayer & Praise recently? Take time to pray in those Bible passages. It's often easier to pray for circumstances to change, or other people to change, but what about you and I? Where do we need to change?

### **CREED: Jesus Christ... conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary**

It is vital that Jesus is both fully human (real human body, mind, will, feelings, decisions, life) and fully God. Only a human could die for our sin as a sacrifice; only God could live a perfect life to be the spotless lamb, and have the infinite worth to bear the sins of many. Jesus the God-man is the perfect Saviour: praise Him!