


## Unshakeable Kingdom

2025-09-07 – Hebrews 12:25-29

	<p>The God who created the heavens and the earth reigns above all His creation. This is good news for those who put their trust in Him, and a warning to those who do not believe. Come join us this Sunday as we consider the good news of the one who reigns above all and His <u>Unshakeable Kingdom</u>.</p>
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Let's pray.

*Father in heaven, we thank you for this day. We thank you, Lord, that **you so loved the world that you sent your Son** (John 3:16). We thank you that He died for our sins. He rose from the grave. He's reigning in heaven, and He is returning someday. We thank you that as we gather today, Lord, to worship you and to hear a message from your word, we thank you, Lord, that **your kingdom is unshakable** (Hebrews 12:28). And we thank you that **for all who believe in your name, we will be in your presence forever** (John 3:16). I pray right now for our hearts, Lord, that your Spirit would be moving, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what your word has to say. And I pray for Elder Rich Odisho, that you would bless his words, that you would speak through him, that you would be speaking to him. We pray all of this in the holy and precious name of your Son, Jesus. Amen.*

So today's sermon will be called "**The Unshakable Kingdom.**" I was going through the titles and thinking about, should I call it "The Consuming Fire" or "**Unshakable Kingdom**"? Because God does both. Basically, **God is a consuming fire** (Deuteronomy 4:24), but at the same time, **He brings us to an unshakable kingdom** (Hebrews 12:28). The text will be in Hebrews, chapter 12, from 25 to 29. If you guys want to follow as I get there to read, that's Hebrews 12:25-29 ESV.

Let's give you a little breakdown of what Hebrews is about, the background here. The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers, Christians who had come out of the old covenant, who had trusted in Christ, but now found themselves tempted to turn back. Why would this be? Because following Jesus was costly, and no one really sits down and thinks about, "When I come to Christ, what will it cost?" The men and women back then didn't think that way, until it got to a point where it was very hard. Their faith brought them persecutions. Some of these folks lost their homes. Some of these folks were imprisoned. Some of these folks were casted out, were known as no good to them, because they stopped doing the sacrifices, the rituals, going to the temple, in that aspect. They began to wonder, "Was it really worth it? Wouldn't it just be easier for us to go back and do what we're doing? We can go and sacrifice, go to the temple, do the rituals, and people will love us."

And the writer of Hebrews, in a passionate, pastoral voice, says, "Don't drift away. Don't turn back. Don't look back to things that did nothing for you, but look forward. Look forward." Because

in every chapter, he drives home one truth: **Jesus is better** (*Hebrews 1-10*). **Jesus is better than the angels** (*Hebrews 1:4*). **Jesus is better than Moses** (*Hebrews 3:3*). **Jesus is better than Aaron** (*Hebrews 7:11-28*). **Jesus is better than all the sacrifices they did back then** (*Hebrews 10:10-14*). The main focus was Christ and Christ alone. From chapter 10 onward, he urges people to persevere. **Hold fast your confession** (*Hebrews 10:23*). **Don't throw away your confidence** (*Hebrews 10:35*). **Run the race set before you** (*Hebrews 12:1*). **Endure discipline. It is the proof of God's love** (*Hebrews 12:6-7*).

It is not easy being tested. It's not easy going through hard times. I know we talk a lot about careers, making money, and so on and so forth. That will shake your kingdom. That will terrify you. But sometimes it can get even worse when health problems come in, your loved ones who are not saved. They're having health issues. And you go, "God, how long? I've been praying for this person for how many years, and yet?" That is a terrifying aspect of life, a person not being saved. But here he says, "**Endure discipline**" (*Hebrews 12:7*). Eyes on Christ, because **Christ is better than everything else you've seen** (*Hebrews 1-10*).

Now we come to **Hebrews 12:25-29**. It's a powerful call to hear God's voice, live in reverence, which is very crucial nowadays. Many people don't live in reverence and stand in awe of His unshakable kingdom and consuming holiness. This passage today is both sobering and glorious. It brings together two truths we often separate, which I see a lot. The kindness of God—**He gives us an unshakable kingdom** (*Hebrews 12:28*)—but yet the severity of God—**He is a consuming fire** (*Hebrews 12:29*). We tend to separate them instead of putting them together. Again, many churches today emphasize one over the other. Some only preach comfort and grace, forgetting that God is holy and fearsome. Others preach only fire and judgment, forgetting the joy and the grace found in Christ. But Scripture doesn't make us choose. This passage holds these truths together beautifully. **The holy God who shakes heaven and earth is also the gracious king who welcomes sinners into His kingdom** (*Hebrews 12:22-24*). And we are evidence.

**The holy God who shakes heaven and earth is also a gracious king** (*Hebrews 12:22-24*). And so this passage is not meant to terrify the believer, but to stir us up to gratitude, worship, and holy reverence. But before we dive into verses 25 through 29, we need to first look at **Hebrews 12:18-24**. The author of Hebrews sets up his final warning by taking us to two mountains, Mount Sinai and then Mount Zion, which represent two covenants, two responses to God's holiness, and two destinies.

Let's look at **Hebrews 12:18-24** and the contrast between the two mountains here: "**For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages**

be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, 'If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.' Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, 'I tremble with fear.' But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel" (*Hebrews 12:18-24*).

Let's look at the first point: the fear of Sinai. We see there what? Fire, darkness, gloom, a voice that made the people tremble. Even Moses was afraid. Why? Because Sinai revealed the unfiltered holiness of God under the old covenant. It was there where **the law was given** (*Exodus 19*). It was where the people stood at a distance. **No one could approach, not even an animal. If it goes there by accident, it gets stoned** (*Exodus 19:13*). It gets killed. Even a stray animal, again, would die just going near that area. So I myself, if I was there in those days, I would have been terrified. I wouldn't even know how to act or what to say. Sinai shows us that **God is not safe in a sense that we are not perfect, and He is** (*Exodus 19*). We can't go before Him.

Point two, let's look at the joy of Zion. But Hebrews says, "**You have not come to Sinai, you have come to Mount Zion**" (*Hebrews 12:22*). This is not a physical mountain, but a spiritual reality, the heavenly Jerusalem. Here, what's at Mount Zion is angels rejoicing, saints gathered, God the judge, but not against us, because we are the believers. **Jesus, the mediator, standing for us, His blood, speaking not of vengeance like Abel's, but of mercy and peace** (*Hebrews 12:24*). At Sinai, people stood afar; at Zion, we are welcomed in. At Sinai, there was fear and trembling; at Zion, there is joy and celebration. At Sinai, **the law exposed sin** (*Romans 7:7*); at Zion, **grace covers it** (*Romans 5:20*). But the point is this: **God has not changed. He is still holy. He's the same consuming fire** (*Hebrews 12:29*), but now **we approach Him through Christ, which received grace** (*Hebrews 4:16*). So we don't look at the anger aspect because why? **We come to Him in Christ. We come before Him in Christ. We are covered in the blood of Christ** (*Hebrews 9:14*). And that was the point of the writer of Hebrews for these men and women.

Now let's take a look at **Hebrews 12:25-29**, which is the passage for the day: "**See that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused Him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject Him who warns us from heaven. At that time His voice shook the earth, but now He has promised, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.' This phrase, 'Yet once more,' indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.**" (*Hebrews 12:25-29*).

Point #1: **Do not refuse Him who speaks** (*Hebrews 12:25*). And who is “Him”? It’s Jesus. **God is not silent** (*Hebrews 1:1-2*). From Genesis to Revelation, God speaks through prophets, through His word, through His Spirit, and ultimately through His Son, Jesus Christ. At Mount Sinai, **He spoke with thunder, lightning, a fire** (*Exodus 19:16-19*). The people trembled. They were overwhelmed. They begged Moses, “You speak to us. Don’t let Him speak to us any longer, because we can’t stand His voice.” Because when He spoke, it terrified them. But what happened next? **They still turned away. They made idols** (*Exodus 32*). **They murmured in the wilderness. They complained about everything they can** (*Numbers 14*). And if you read through the Old Testament, you’ll see them saying, **“It’s better for us that we stayed in Egypt”** (*Numbers 14:2-3*). Because why? Because they ate watermelon, they ate food, they drank, but they forgot all the bad, horrible things that happened during their slavery times in Egypt. They said, “Egypt is better than God.”

And folks, let’s not kid ourselves. That happens now in our time. “I was better here, but when I came here, look what happened to me. At least when I was here, I was making it. Now here, that thing’s gone backwards. I get no help. I’m down and out.” Because our focus is not on eternal things, but on worldly things. And that was the problem with them in the past. They worried about their watermelon. They worried about the water they got every day or the food they ate. But when God rescued them through Moses, they really hated that. And notice **that generation did not make it to the promised land except for two people with the new generation** (*Numbers 14:30*). **They were all destroyed** (*Numbers 14:35*) because everything He showed them, all the goodness that He showed them, yet they went against Him.

Today, **God speaks through Christ, which is the final word** (*Hebrews 1:1-2*). **Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, “Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened”** (*Matthew 11:28*). **“Repent and believe the gospel. Follow Me”** (*Mark 1:15, Matthew 4:19*). All God is asking is this: Repent, believe, follow Him. Nothing more. Because everything else, the Spirit of God is going to actually help you and sanctify it throughout your life. And then you are going to bring honor and glory through your life to Him. John MacArthur writes, “The greater the revelation, the greater the accountability.” The turn from Christ is to reject the clearest, fullest message God has ever given. Question for you today, and for people online: Are you listening to His voice? Or are you refusing it? There’s something really to think about. Is there a sin you’re holding on to? A step of obedience you’re avoiding? Listen, we all have issues and problems. We’re all scared of something.

One of the things I’m scared of in life, and I was talking to Pastor Matt and a couple of guys, is me being up here preaching the Word of God. It is very, very weighty. I’m not worried about the people. I’m not scared of the people. But I stand before Him as I proclaim His Word. That terrifies

me. And Matt has asked me in the past about preaching, I'm like, "Hey, hold off on that." That's the honest truth, though, right? I mean, it is what it is. I'm not going to lie to you folks. Now, I talked to Richard earlier about it too, but we're all scared of something. But we have to have our eyes on Christ because everything we do, we do unto Him. Whether we look like fools in front of people, what does it matter? In heaven, guess what? It doesn't matter no more. You are walking with **the King of kings, Lord of lords** (*Revelation 19:16*).

Point two: **God's voice shakes heaven and earth** (*Hebrews 12:26*). Verse 26 recalls how **God's voice shook the earth at Sinai** (*Exodus 19:18*), but that was only the beginning. Hebrews quotes **Haggai 2:6, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens"** (*Haggai 2:6*). This is a promise, and also it's a warning. There is coming a final cosmic shake and a great upheaval that will remove everything temporary, man-made, worldly. It'll be all removed so that **only what is eternal will remain** (*Hebrews 12:27*). And trust me, **the blood of Christ counts enormously** (*Hebrews 9:14*). That means if it's on us, we are something huge to Him. We are eternal with Him because of what He does for us.

The world today feels, again, unstable. We hear about what? War raging, economies crashing, cultural shift, moral decay, institutions crumbling. And the funny part is this: Sometimes we rely on these things. We rely on bank accounts, on our jobs, and sometimes, you know, we bet big and say, "I'm good now," until one day your world shakes. And I look at Job. He had it all, a righteous man. He was tested, Satan tried to get to him. Got to his wife, but not to him. But his whole world shook. But we see where Job stood. **He was on a solid foundation** (*Job 1:20-22*). If our world shook today, where would we be at? Where would we stand? Where would we run to? Again, folks, these are all tremors, but the final shaking is still to come. Jonathan Edwards described this as a time when **God will sift the visible from the invisible, the false from the true, the perishable from the eternal** (*paraphrased*). Only one foundation will remain, and that is **Christ** (*1 Corinthians 3:11*). **"No other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"** (*1 Corinthians 3:11*).

What are you building your foundation on? Is your identity wrapped up in money, status, comfort, or success? Sometimes I'm guilty of it, too. Don't worry about it. But the Lord always shakes us and wakes us up again. And we come back and repent and say, "Lord, I did it again." But that's the kind of God we have. We have a gracious God that He understands us. He disciplines us, but He understands us and He takes care of us and He helps us. When storms come, **the only house that stands is the one that's built on a rock** (*Matthew 7:24-27*).

Point #3: **Receiving the unshakable kingdom** (*Hebrews 12:28*). **"Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken"** (*Hebrews 12:28*). That word "receiving" matters.

**We don't build this kingdom. We don't earn this kingdom. It is given to us by the grace of God** (*Ephesians 2:8-9*). Because why? Because He wants to give it to us. There is no other answer. It's because He was loving enough to say, "I want to save, I want to share, I want to give, I want to be good to you." Because you know why? **He is a good God. He is a gracious God** (*Psalms 145:8-9*). Remember, everything in this world falls apart. Every other kingdom in history has fallen—from Egypt, Babylon, Rome, even modern superpowers rise and fall. And we see what happens on a daily basis. But don't allow that to consume you. That is nothing. Because when the earth and the heavens shake, trust me, we are all gonna feel it. Everyone's gonna feel it. But the good thing is **we stand in that shaking. We will stand** (*Hebrews 12:28*).

This should stir gratitude, gratitude that leads to worship, gratitude that leads to obedience, gratitude that leads to endurance in trials. John Calvin said, **"This unshakable kingdom is our anchor. It is what sustains us when the world gives way"** (*paraphrased*). R.C. Sproul adds, **"We do not approach God casually. We approach Him with reverence and awe"** (*paraphrased*). Reverence and awe. And believe it or not, a lot of churches miss that by a mile, by a long shot. Does your worship reflect the weight of His kingdom? Are you living with awe and thankfulness? If we receive the kingdom, let's worship the King with all we have, with all we are, and just give it all to Him.

Point four: **Our God is a consuming fire** (*Hebrews 12:29*). And this here, the word "consuming fire" is where it terrifies people, because it is scary. **He's a consuming fire** (*Deuteronomy 4:24*). This is not just poetic language. It is a quote from **Deuteronomy 4:24**, where **Moses warned Israel not to worship idols** (*Deuteronomy 4:24*). In Scripture, fire is often a symbol of judgment, right? Look at Sodom. We look at Nadab, Abihu, Ananias, Sapphira. Also, fire is often a symbol of purification. **Malachi 3:3, He will refine us like gold** (*Malachi 3:3*). Also, fire is often a symbol of His presence—burning bush, pillar of fire. So that can mean many different things in different ways. It all depends on where we stand with God. For the unbeliever, this fire will consume them. But for a believer, **this fire will purify you. It purifies us** (*1 Peter 1:7*). At the cross, these two realities, judgment and grace, collided. **God's consuming fire of wrath fell not on us, but on Jesus** (*Isaiah 53:5*). He took it for us. And I don't want to think of what that would look like, because we will not be able to handle it. **Christ bore the full heat of God's righteous anger so that we could receive the warmth of His mercy** (*Romans 5:8-9*). The fire that would have destroyed us, instead it refined us because of Jesus Christ.

Voddie Baucham says, "If you don't understand the wrath of God, you can't understand the love of God." Truly can. Because what makes the cross so beautiful is not just that Jesus died, but why He died. **To satisfy the consuming justice of a holy God and to make sinners holy** (*Hebrews*

10:14). Let's not forget fire still falls. There's a fire. A judgment will fall on the non-believers, but also a fire of discipline falls upon us as far as purifying us. **1 Peter says, "Our faith is refined like gold, tested by fire" (1 Peter 1:7).** So here's a truth: If you belong to Christ, the fire is not your enemy. It's your purifier. But if you reject Him, the fire will be your judge. Don't treat God casually. Don't play games with holiness. Fear God, but not in a way that leads to despair. Fear Him in a way that leads you to the cross (Proverbs 9:10). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10).

Let His holiness lead you to Christ, and let His consuming fire burn away everything that doesn't look like Him. **Listen to God's voice. Do not harden your hearts (Hebrews 3:8). Do not harden your hearts (Hebrews 3:15).** Come to Mount Zion instead of Mount Sinai. **Mount Zion is a "mount of grace" (Hebrews 12:22-24),** that we can come and rejoice with the Lord for eternity. Mount Sinai will destroy you. None of us will make it. And we should be very thankful for what God has done for us on the cross.

And I urge people who do not know the Lord, today will be a day that you repent and turn to God. And if you don't understand what that means, or how that looks like, we got many people here who can help you. We are here to preach the gospel and to pray for souls to be saved. That's what we're here for. That is what number one priority is. Live in light of the coming shaking. Everything around us, again, is temporary. Everything will go away. Everything will fall apart in this world. **The only thing remains in the end is Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11).** Worship with reverence and awe. Worship is not a performance. When these guys are up here, singing and playing, trust me, I know these guys. It's not for performance. They're actually worshiping and praising God. They practice to make sure they do it right before the sight of God. They spend time on doing this. And they don't only do it here, but they do it at home as well, before they come here. When we come together, we come together to worship our holy God. As I come into Mount Zion, coming without fear, with a smile on your face, smile on our hearts, for **the God who died for us on the cross (John 3:16).**

**John 10:28 says, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand".** Once His, always His. There's no going back. Thank God for that part. Because trust me, without Him, someone like me would go back. That's the honest truth. That is the flesh, the desires. So our focus is this: If you have been walking towards Mount Sinai, turn the other way. **Come to Mount Zion (Hebrews 12:22), where Jesus Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). He is King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16) no matter what you do or I do. But He extended out there the gospel for you guys, for me (Romans 1:16).**

He extended His hand. **He commanded everyone to repent and turn to Him (Acts 17:30). Come to Mount Zion (Hebrews 12:22).**

Let us pray.

*Heavenly Father, we thank you again. We thank you for your blessings and gifts. Thank you for your mercy and grace. Thank you that **we can come before you in peace to worship you, to love you, to live our lives not in fear (Hebrews 4:16). We don't come before a God who will consume us. We come before a God who will love us because of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Thank you, Lord. Amen.***



Digging Deeper – **Unshakeable Kingdom** – Hebrews 12:25-29

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?
2. Can you think of a time in your life when you have been deeply shaken by something that you thought was unchangeable? (For instance, 9/11 is a moment for many that changed how we saw America and the world...)

Read Hebrews 12:25-29

3. As you read through these verses, what stands out to you?
4. Who is the “him” I verse 25? What do we learn about him earlier in the chapter?
5. What is the warning for us today?
6. What does it mean to refuse to reject the warning?
7. What does it mean that he will not only shake the earth, but also the heavens?
8. What do we learn about God when we consider His voice can shake both the heavens and the earth? Where do we see examples of this in Scripture?
9. As a believer, do you believe you are a part of a kingdom that cannot be shaken? Why is it hard to believe this is true?
10. What should our response be to being a part of this kingdom? What should it change about our lives?
11. How do these verses cause you to long for eternity?
12. Take some time to end in prayer by sharing requests and praying for one another. Pray that we would be a church that trusts that our God’s kingdom will not be shaken.