



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Warning Against Refusing the Lord **SPEAKER** DSP Chua Seng Lee
THEME Warnings in the Book of Hebrews **DATE** 29 & 30 May 2021

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The book of Hebrews was written to encourage believers to keep their faith to the end by highlighting the supremacy of Jesus. Jesus is greater and better than all their heroes and their practices. Jesus is the representation and the fulfilment of their teaching. The five warnings in Hebrews were given so that believers can finish the race strong and well. This week, DSP Chua Seng Lee drew lessons from Hebrews 12:18–29 to warn us against refusing the Lord because of the severity of the consequence and reminds us about the security we can enjoy in His Kingdom.

WARNING AGAINST REFUSING THE LORD (HEBREWS 12:18-29)

Hebrews 12:25 warns us not to refuse the Lord. To refuse the Lord is to disregard, disobey, resist, and reject God and His teaching. Let's look at the previous verses to understand the context of "not refusing the Lord".

1. Severity of the consequence (Hebrews 12:18–25)

<u>Mt Sinai (LAW)</u> v 18–21 the place where the law was given.	<u>Mt Zion (GRACE)</u> v22–24 the place where Jesus was crucified and resurrected
Fearful presence of God Holiness, Judgement Relationship by performance NO ONE could make it Old Covenant	Presence of God Celebration, festivity Relationship through Jesus All who believed made perfect New Covenant

It is important that we know about holiness and the judgement of God (Mt Sinai) so that we can truly appreciate the extent of God's grace for us. However, we need to understand that our relationship with God is no longer based on our performance (Mt Sinai) but by the grace of God (Mt Zion). The terrifying encounter with God at Mt Sinai did not help the people to walk in His holiness. This was evident when the Israelites soon turned away from God and worshipped the golden calf. Mount Sinai was a place for the law, but it could not change man. We need to come back to live by God's grace (Mt Zion) for it is the goodness of God that leads us into repentance. The blood of Jesus speaks better than the blood of Abel (Heb 12:24) because it speaks of God's forgiveness and mercy, and the price of sin being paid in full on the cross. The blood of Jesus is still available for us today.

Heb 12:25 calls us not to reject the the message of Jesus – his message of grace. Unfortunately, many believers today are still living by the law. We do this when we make attempts to prove ourselves and earn God’s acceptance through the means of our appearances, accomplishments, assets and association. By doing this, we are actually refusing God and ignoring His message of grace. We need to recognize that we are already accepted by God’s grace; no amount of work can change that.

2. Security in His kingdom (Hebrews 12:26–29)

We should not refuse the Lord because of the security we can have in His kingdom. Heb 12:26 warns us that what is coming next is a time of shaking of the heavens and the earth. This shaking can come in the form of natural disasters, man-made crises, unexplainable phenomenas, etc. Many things in our lives, such as our financial investments, health, network and net worth can all be easily shaken. The purpose of these shakings is so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain (Heb 12:27). The one thing that would not be shaken is the kingdom we receive in Christ Jesus (Heb 12:28). This unshakable kingdom refers to the spiritual nature of the new covenant. It is the last and permanent covenant between God and His people. This new covenant in Heb 8:10–12 consist of three parts: the inward conscience (v10), the intimate knowledge of God (v11), and the iniquities of men forgiven (v12).

In the light of this unshakable kingdom, Heb 12:28–29 reminds us to show gratitude by offering to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Let our gratitude overflow into action and service unto God. There is a need for us to show reverence and not to be flippant before our Lord Almighty. At the same time, we need to learn to let go of the shakeable things in our lives. Hold everything loosely and hold on to God tightly. Do not be consumed by our greed, but learn to give.

CONCLUSION

Hebrews 12:18–29 warns us not to refuse the message of God’s grace because of:

- **the severity of the consequence:** we ought to live by grace and not by the law. One application is to strengthen our altar of Praise/Thanksgiving/Worship. Learn to pause and reconnect with God personally. Turn this time of social isolation to spiritual intimacy. Cultivate a deeper, personal spiritual encounter with God in our personal worship. Enter the throne of grace more frequently and more fervently. When we do that, we will find the grace from God to tide us through in our time of need (Heb 4:16).
- **the security in His kingdom:** we ought to live with gratefulness not with greed. One application here is to sow by faith with reverence. Let our giving be a moment of worship, a time to be thankful and grateful to the Lord for His provision. Ask the Lord to bless and multiply as we sow into His kingdom. Let gratitude flow out of everything we do.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the two reasons we should not refuse Jesus and His message of grace? What do they mean to you personally?

2. Do you tend to live by your appearance, accomplishment, assets or association more than by the grace of God? How can we move away from striving for performance while living in today's modern and competitive society?

3. Heb 12:28–29 calls us to show gratitude by offering God an acceptable service with reverence and awe. How are you serving the Lord today? Is your service unto the Lord an act of performance or is it an offering of gratitude?