**Jesus, Our Great High Priest**

**Hebrews: Hearing and Obeying God’s Son**

**Hebrews 12:12-29**

**The True Promised Land**

[God, our loving Father, is disciplining us by means of life’s struggles, to promote our holiness and peace. . . (vv. 12:1-11)

 So. . .]

Never quit! Keep pursuing grace in self and others. vv. 12-17

 Let grace sustain you so passing passions don’t derail you.

 Don’t be like Esau, who craved blessing without birthright.

Because we now rejoice in the Reality, not its Shadow. vv. 18-24

 Be encouraged that what was promised is now fulfilled in Jesus.

 We approach God not in fear, but accepted in the New Covenant.

And pay attention! The unseen is what will remain. vv. 25-29

 Remember that God will make all things new.

 Don’t be like Israel, who refused to listen to God.

***Are you following hard after God?***

 Our author repeatedly has reminded us, his readers, of how serious matters are in our relationship with God. How do we pursue grace?

*1. We remember that God’s judgment is real and inevitable.*

We should never assume that because God is patient, He is not also just. True believers make themselves ready to meet Him. 1 John 3:1-3

 *2. We develop a taste for God and His covenant of grace.*

 Esau thought he could inherit a blessing without regard for the birthright. This is highly meaningful for us. Just as Esau “despised his birthright” (Genesis 25:34), but still desired prosperity, so also we can turn our backs on God and His grace and still, somehow, expect things to “turn out okay.” Esau did not seek repentance, only the blessing, because he never developed a desire, or spiritual taste for the things of God and the covenant of grace given to Abraham and then to Esau’s father, Isaac. What is it that you desire above all else? 1 Corinthians 2:12-14

*3. We realize that the true Promised Land will come when Jesus returns.*

 A key lesson here is that the saints of bygone eras did not receive what was promised, ***even though they inherited the land!*** It was never about a strip of land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, but for God’s people to reign over the whole planet. The “heavenly Jerusalem” is “the city of the living God,” which comprise “the spirits of the righteous made perfect.” This is the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21, and the city for which the patriarchs looked (Hebrews 11:13-16).