



Letter to the Hebrews, Greek text on papyrus, c. 180-200 CE, Egypt

A Letter to Bring the Hebrews to Christianity

A New Covenant

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews contrasts the Old Testament giving of the law on Mount Sinai to the new covenant given Jesus in the New Testament. Hoping to win Hebrews over to Christianity, the author emphasizes the approachability of the Christian God, particularly in contrast to the forbidding, willful God depicted in Exodus at the first giving of the law at Sinai. In this excerpt, the author dramatizes the terror Moses felt upon his first encounter with God on Sinai.

Hebrews 12:18-21

¹⁸ For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, ¹⁹ And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which [voice] they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: ²⁰ (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: ²¹ And so terrible was the sight, [that] Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake)

Source: Blue Letter Bible. "Letter to the Hebrews 12 - (KJV - King James Version)." Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2010. 7 Nov 2010. < <http://www.blueletterbible.org/Bible.cfm?b=Hbr&c=12&t=KJV> >