

The Jesus Who Touches (And Welcomes People to Touch Him)

The concept of touch is prevalent throughout Scripture (132x NASB) – 94x in the OT, 38x in the NT

In the NT, 30 of 38 instances are in the Synoptic Gospels

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|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| • All (132) | • <u>2 Kings (1)</u> | • <u>Haggai (2)</u> |
| • OT(94) | • <u>1 Chronicles (1)</u> | • <u>Zechariah (1)</u> |
| • <u>Genesis (8)</u> | • <u>2 Chronicles (2)</u> | • NT(38) |
| • <u>Exodus (4)</u> | • <u>Esther (1)</u> | • <u>Matthew (8)</u> |
| • <u>Leviticus (27)</u> | • <u>Job (6)</u> | • <u>Mark (10)</u> |
| • <u>Numbers (9)</u> | • <u>Psalm (3)</u> | • <u>Luke (12)</u> |
| • <u>Deuteronomy (1)</u> | • <u>Proverbs (1)</u> | • <u>1 Corinthians (1)</u> |
| • <u>Joshua (1)</u> | • <u>Isaiah (2)</u> | • <u>2 Corinthians (1)</u> |
| • <u>Judges (1)</u> | • <u>Jeremiah (3)</u> | • <u>Colossians (1)</u> |
| • <u>Ruth (1)</u> | • <u>Lamentations (2)</u> | • <u>Hebrews (3)</u> |
| • <u>1 Samuel (1)</u> | • <u>Ezekiel (4)</u> | • <u>1 John (2)</u> |
| • <u>2 Samuel (2)</u> | • <u>Daniel (6)</u> | |
| • <u>1 Kings (3)</u> | • <u>Amos (1)</u> | |

Synoptic Parallels Table:

<https://www.gospelparallels.com/>

“Touching Makes You Healthier”

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/HEALTH/01/05/touching.makes.you.healthier.health/>

- lowering blood pressure and heart rate
- increasing immune function
- relieving pain
- increases happiness
- makes you less anxious, more relaxed, makes muscles unclench
- causes the levels of the stress hormone cortisol to drop (cortisol suppresses the immune response)
- you can regroup and recharge
- more robust immune system
- hugging (“Hugging induces oxytocin, the “bonding hormone,” that’s renowned for reducing stress, lowering cortisol levels and increasing a sense of trust and security. According to research conducted at the University of North Carolina, women who receive more hugs from their partners have lower heart rates and blood pressure and higher levels of oxytocin.” [PsychCentral article](#))
- holding hands (“clasping hands reduces stress-related activity in a brain area called the hypothalamus -- which lowers the levels of cortisol coursing through your system -- as well as in the part of the brain that registers pain, which actually helps keep you from feeling it as much.”)
- cuddling with your pet helps you focus on them, so your mind doesn’t ruminate about pain

“Physical Contact and Loneliness: Being Touched Reduces Perceptions of Loneliness”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7250541/>

“The Power of Touch” (Romania story)

<https://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/power-touch>

“11 Science-Backed Truths on the Power of Human Touch”

<https://brainfodder.org/11-studies-human-touch/>

- conveys regard
- conveys affection
- causes the recipient to feel respect and regard for the person who initiated the touch
- touch and eye contact are a powerful combination (sign of familiarity, friendship, respect)
- makes you appear more trustworthy
- communicates honesty, confidence, well-informedness
- touch twice for maximum effect (people are more likely to agree)
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“Benefits of Human Touch: What is the Impact on Our Health?”

<https://www.hcf.com.au/health-agenda/body-mind/mental-health/benefit-human-touch>

- reassurance
- empathy
- comfort
- love
- compassion
- sadness
- connection
- boosts wellbeing
- receptors in the skin go to the brain
- lower BP and heart rates, higher oxytocin, better phys and psych health, improved relationships

Other articles (Googled: “[psychological power of touch](#)”)

The Tallit and Tzitzit: Their Biblical Symbolism and Significance

<https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/newsletter/newsletter-sep-1993/the-tallit-and-tzitzit/>

What is the significance of the hem of Jesus’ garment?

<https://endofthematter.com/2015/10/why-is-there-healing-in-the-hem-of-jesus-garment/>

Jesus Touching People

A Leper

Matthew 8:3

When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him. And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Mark 1:40-45 And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and ^bthey were coming to Him from everywhere.

Luke 5:12-16

While He was in one of the cities, behold, *there was* a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him. And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus Himself would often slip away ¹to the wilderness and pray.

Peter's Mother-in-Law

Matthew 8:15

When Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him. When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. *This was* to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES."

Mark 1:29-34

And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them.

When evening came, after the sun had set, they *began* bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.

Luke 4:38-41

Then He got up and *left* the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her. And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them.

While the sun was setting, all those who had any *who were* sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and **laying His hands on each one of them**, He was healing them. Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.

Jairus' daughter

Matthew 9:18-19, 23-26

While He was saying these things to them, a **synagogue official** came and bowed down before Him, and said, "My **daughter** has just died; but **come and lay Your hand on her**, and **she will live**." **Jesus got up and began to follow him, and so did His disciples.**

When Jesus came into the official's house, and saw the flute-players and the crowd in noisy disorder, He said, "Leave; for **the girl** has not died, but is asleep." And they *began* laughing at Him. But when the crowd had been sent out, **He entered and took her by the hand**, and **the girl got up**. This news spread throughout all that land.

Blind Man/Blind Men ("Son of David!")

Matthew 9:27-31

As Jesus went on from there, **two blind men** followed Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When **He entered the house**, the **blind men came up to Him**, and **Jesus said to them**, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then **He touched their eyes**, saying, "It shall be done to you according to your faith." **And their eyes were opened**. And **Jesus sternly warned them**: "See that no one knows *about this!*" **But they went out and spread the news about Him throughout all that land.**

-----([see article](#))

Matthew 20:29-34

As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. And **two blind men** sitting by the road, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, "Lord, *a*have mercy on us, *b*Son of David!" The crowd sternly told them to be quiet, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" And **Jesus stopped and called them**, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Lord, *we want* our eyes to be opened." **Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes**; and **immediately they regained their sight and followed Him**.

Mark 10:46-52 (one blind man: "Blind Bartimaeus)

Then they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar *named* **Bartimaeus**, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. When he heard

that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him *here*.” So they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you.” Throwing aside his cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus. And answering him, **Jesus said, “What do you want Me to do for you?”** And the blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, *I want to regain my sight!*” And **Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.”** Immediately he regained his sight and *began following Him on the road.*

Luke 18:35-43

As Jesus was approaching Jericho, **a blind man** was sitting by the road begging. Now hearing a crowd going by, he *began to inquire what this was.* They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he called out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” And **Jesus stopped and commanded that he be brought to Him;** and when he came near, He **questioned him, “What do you want Me to do for you?”** And he said, “Lord, *I want to regain my sight!*” And Jesus said to him, **“Receive your sight; *your faith has ²made you well.*”** Immediately he regained his sight and *began following Him, glorifying God; and when all the people saw it, they gave praise to God.*

Peter walking on water

Matthew 14:31

Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” **And He said, “Come!”** And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” **Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand [NIV: reached out His hand] and took hold of him [NIV: caught him],** and ***said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”** When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “You are certainly God’s Son!”

Peter, James, and John at the Transfiguration

Matthew 17:7

Six days later **Jesus took with Him ^bPeter and ¹James and John** his brother, and **led them up on a high mountain** by themselves. And **He was transfigured** before them; and **His face shone like the sun,** and **His garments became as white as light.** And behold, **Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.** Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, **a bright cloud overshadowed them,** and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, **“This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!”** When the disciples heard *this,* they fell face down to the ground and were terrified. And **Jesus came to them and touched them** and said, **“Get up, and do not be afraid.”** And lifting up their eyes, they saw **no one except Jesus Himself alone.**

Deaf Man Who Spoke with Difficulty**Mark 7:31-37**

Again **He went out** from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis. They brought to Him **one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty**, and **they implored Him to lay His hand on him**. **Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva; and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, "Ephphatha!" that is, "Be opened!" And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly. And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. They were utterly astonished, saying, "He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."**

Blind Man (spit on his eyes)**Mark 8:22 (four/five mentions of touch)**

And they came to Bethsaida. And they brought a **blind man** to Jesus and **implored Him to touch him**. **Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see men, for I see *them* like trees, walking around."** Then **again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly. And He sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."**

Children**Mark 10:13-16**

And **they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them**; but the disciples rebuked them. But **when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, "Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it *at all*."** And **He "took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.**

Luke 18:15-17

And they were bringing even their **babies** to Him **so that He would touch them**, but when the disciples saw it, they *began* rebuking them. But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. "Truly I say to you, "whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it *at all*."

Malchus / Slave of the High Priest**Matt 26:51-56**

No mention of touch or healing. Jesus says to put the sword back in the sheath, that all who live by the sword will perish by it, and that He could appeal to the Father to send 12,000 angels. Scripture must be fulfilled. Swords and clubs remark, sitting in the temple teaching remark. Disciples leave Him and flee.

Mark 14:47

No touch/healing. Swords and clubs, teaching/temple, fulfillment of Scrip, all leave/flee.

Luke 22:51

(After Peter cuts off the ear of the **slave of the high priest**): But Jesus answered and said, “Stop! No more of this.” And **He touched his ear** and **healed him**. Swords and clubs remark, teaching in the temple remark. Adds: “This hour and the power of darkness are yours.”

John 18:1-11

Jesus does not heal Malchus in this account but tells Peter to put his sword back in the sheath because He must drink the cup the Father has given Him.

People Touching Jesus

Woman Hemmorhaging

Matthew 9:20-22

And a **woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years**, came up behind Him and **touched the fringe of His cloak**; for she was saying to herself, “**If I only touch His garment, I will get well.**” But **Jesus turning and seeing her said**, “**Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well.**” **At once the woman was made well.**

Mark 5:25-34

A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse —after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind *Him* and **touched His cloak**. **For she thought**, “**If I just touch His garments, I will get well.**” Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that “the power *proceeding* from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, “**Who touched My garments?**” And His disciples said to Him, “You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, ‘**Who touched Me?**’” And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction.”

Luke 8:43-48

And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind Him and **touched the fringe of His cloak**, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. And Jesus said, “Who is the one who **touched Me?**” And while they were all denying it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You.” But Jesus said, “**Someone did touch Me**, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me.” When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason **why she had touched Him**, and how she had been immediately healed. And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has ¹made you well; go in peace.”

Multitudes by the Sea

Matthew 4:24-25

Fame goes out; many healed and delivered. Does not mention touch.

Matthew 12:15

Man with withered hand is healed on the Sabbath, but Jesus does not touch the man. He commands that the man stretch forth his hand, and the man was healed. Jesus warns them not to tell who He was; this passage also adds the prophecy from Isaiah 42:1-3.

Mark 3:7-12

Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a **great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of people** heard of all that He was doing and came to Him. And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him; for **He had healed many**, with the result that **all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him**. Whenever **the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are "the Son of God!"** And He **earnestly warned them not to tell who He was**.

Luke 6:17-19

Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place; and *there was* a large crowd of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. And **all the people were trying to touch Him**, for power was coming from Him and healing *them* all. [See Luke 5:17: "the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.]

Many Healings at Gennesaret

Matthew 14:34-36

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. And when **the men of that place recognized Him, they sent word** into all that surrounding district and brought to Him **all who were sick**; and they implored Him **that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it** were **cured**.

Mark 6:53-56

When they had crossed over they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. When they got out of the boat, immediately *the people* recognized Him, and ran about that whole country and began to carry here and there on their pallets **those who were sick**, to the place they heard He was. Wherever **He entered villages, or cities, or countryside**, they were laying the sick in the market places, and **implored Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured**.

John 6:22-25

Does not mention touch.

'Sinful' Woman/Mary who Anointed Jesus**Luke 7:36-50 (Jesus's anointing with perfume)**

Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined *at the table*. And there was a **woman in the city who was a sinner**; and when she learned that He was reclining *at the table* in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, and standing behind *Him* at His feet, weeping, **she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume**. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is **touching** Him, that she is a sinner." **And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher." "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. "When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly." Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but **she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.** "You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, **has not ceased to kiss My feet.** "You did not anoint My head with oil, but **she anointed My feet with perfume.** "For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven." Those who were reclining *at the table* with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this *man* who even forgives sins?" **And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."****

John 11:2

"It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill."

Disciples / Thomas**Luke 24:36-43 (An invitation to touch Jesus)**

While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be to you." But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; **touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.**" And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. While they still could not believe *it* because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; and He took it and ate *it* before them.

John 20:19-29

So when it was evening on that day, the first *day* of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace *be* with you." And when He had said this, **He showed them both His hands and His side.** The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace *be* with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, **He**

breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. “If you forgive the sins of any, *their sins* have been forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they have been retained.”

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and **put my finger into the place of the nails**, and **put my hand into His side**, I will not believe.”

After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and **stood in their midst** and said, “Peace *be* with you.” Then He said to Thomas, “**Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side**; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.” Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed *are* they who did not see, and *yet* believed.”

John

1 John 1:1

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and **touched with our hands**, concerning the Word of Life—

Reasons for or results of touch:

Compassion
Love/Belonging
Healing
Forgiveness
Peace
Testimony/Faith

Other References to Touch

Matthew 23:4

And they tie up heavy burdens and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are **unwilling to move them with so much as their finger**.

Luke 11:46

But He said, “Woe to you lawyers as well! For you weigh men down with burdens hard to bear, while you yourselves **will not even touch the burdens with one of your fingers**.

See also Acts 15:10

Now therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

Matthew 11:29

Jesus invites us to **take His yoke upon us** (in this He contrasts to the religious leaders who themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to help people bear their burdens).

2 Corinthians 6:17

Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

Colossians 2:21

“Do not handle, do not taste, **do not touch!**”

Hebrews 11:28

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not **touch** them.

Hebrews 4:14-16

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have “a high priest **who cannot sympathize [KJV: “cannot be touched”] with our weaknesses [KJV: “the feeling of our infirmities”]**, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet* without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 12:18-24

For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, “**IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED.**” And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, “I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling.” **But you have come to** Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of ¹angels, to the general assembly and church 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**, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.