



Everything Will Be Shaken

by Dale Rumble

Introduction

America has experienced several regional disasters in recent years: hurricane Katrina, floods, droughts, destructive wind-driven fires, etc. There was also a national disaster in 2001, when terrorists attacked our nation.

What is the meaning of these shakings? Climate scientists believe that the regional issues were simply due to unique and unexpected weather patterns. However, I disagree, for I believe that God is speaking to us, saying, "I am doing the shaking; I want to get your attention because I love you." I believe this for the following reasons:

- Christianity in America is being replaced by Secular Humanism.
- The Bible has been taken out of our social conscience, in particular, out of schools, courts and government.
- There is a legal right to abort our unborn babies.
- There is a growing acceptance of homosexual lifestyles.
- The teaching of creationism has been replaced by the theory of evolution in our schools and universities.

The church age will close in a time of tribulation and shaking as the Lord restores His church and brings in the final harvest of souls. This tract has been written to show how the Lord shakes the status quo to reveal His purpose and glory.

God's Promise of Future Shaking

God first revealed His strategy of shaking through the prophet Haggai.

For thus says the Lord of hosts, "Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth (desire) of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory," says the Lord of hosts. . . . "The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former," says the Lord of hosts, "and in this place I will give peace," says the Lord of hosts. (Haggai 2:6-7, 9)

The Lord first shook the earth when He came down and gave the Law to Israel. Haggai prophesied of a greater, future shaking that would shake both the heavens and the earth, including all nations. There was glory in God's house because of the Law (i.e. the Tabernacle and Temple); however, the glory of the future shaking would be much greater. It is apparent from scripture that by the phrase, "once more," Haggai was prophesying of the future coming of Christ, of His death and resurrection, of the glorious church age that would follow, ending in a time of great glory and an abundant harvest from all nations. A consistent theme of scripture in Old and New Testaments is God calling His people (often by shakings) to return to Him. When His people do repent, He visits them with mercy and glory. Such a visitation of glory brings in a harvest of new souls. God's purpose in shaking is for glory and harvest.

Shaking & Harvest

Shakings in the heavens or on earth are related, for what happens in one realm affects the other. A great example of this relationship took place when God poured out His Holy Spirit from heaven on the day of Pentecost. The impact on earth has been the millions of believers who have been saved from the realm of spiritual darkness.

The prophet, Joel, describes this outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the early rain that would prepare the soil and germinate the crops. He prophesied that after this God would pour out both an early and a latter, or autumn, rain. This would promote the maturing and ripening of the grain for an abundant harvest in the last days.

It is important that the church does not simply rejoice over how God poured out His Spirit at Pentecost, but rather look forward to how He will manifest His glorious presence in the church at the end of this age.

*So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in the Lord your God; for He has given you the early rain (i.e. Pentecost) for your vindication. And He has poured down for you the rain, the early and latter (i.e. Autumn) rain as before. **The threshing floors will be full of grain, and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.** (Joel 2:3-4)*

One of the wonderful consequences of the final outpouring of the latter rain will be to restore lost truth to the church (Acts 3:19-21). Joel speaks of this lost truth in terms of the destructive effect of locusts on the harvests in bygone years.

Then I will make up to you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the creeping locust, the stripping locust and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you. (Joel 2:25)

The ultimate goal for the rain of God's Spirit in the harvest is to bring forth His glory in His house, the church. Ultimately the earth will be filled with knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

God's call to the church today is not to escape tribulation, but to gain the glory of God.

The Glory of God

We are to love and obey God, but we are also to hold Him in reverence and awe. The shakings of God must not be taken lightly. Consider how the glory of His presence shook His people at Mount Sinai:

... 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." (Hebrews 12:18-21)

Moses asked God to show him His glory. The Lord replied that He would pass by Moses and declare His name and His goodness (Exodus 33:18-19; 34:6-7). God defined His glory in terms of the following seven qualities of His nature and character: compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, merciful, full of truth, forgives sin and He is just. These divine attributes are what the Lord is seeking to build into His church. They are the glory that will bring multitudes to Him.

Shaking and the Glory to Come

Details of the great ("yet once more") shaking which Haggai prophesied of are revealed in the epistle to the Hebrews (chapter 12 and verses 25-29). Let us explore each verse in order.

- Verse 25

See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. for if those did not escape when they refused Him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

The primary cause for shaking is when God's people ignore or disobey His revealed will. The writer points us back in history to recognize the failure of Israel.

- Verse 26

And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven."

In the Old Testament, God came to earth and, on Mount Sinai, He spoke through Moses to His people. Now He is speaking from Mount Zion in heaven through the Holy Spirit to His people on earth.

God can shake affairs in the life of any individual believer, whom He loves and seeks to change. A church can be shaken if the lifestyle of believers, their relationship or the foundation of the church does not reflect the centrality of Christ. A region of churches can be shaken by the Lord to call His people to repent, to recognize and pray against spiritual authorities of evil who Satan has placed over their geographic area. One cannot divorce shakings on earth from what is taking place in the heavenlies and vice versa. A future shaking in the heavens that will greatly affect the earth is when Satan is cast out of the atmospheric heaven onto the earth (Revelation 12:7-12).

- Verse 27

This expression, "yet once more," denotes the removing of things which can be shaken, as of created (made) things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

The word "created" in this verse is translated from the Greek word, "POIEO," which means, "to make" or "as having been made." When "create" refers to an act of God, scripture uses the Greek word, "KTIZO." Thus, what will be shaken are those things which God did not create.

When a people group who have Christian roots turn away from God, He will move to gain their repentance. He moves out of His sovereign will and love for us. This is precisely the situation in the USA today. The various shakings that America has experienced in recent years are divine messages, calling the church to repentance. By God's grace, this could lead to revival in the church bringing a visitation of the Holy Spirit that would change the nation. In a present day visitation of God, the following are five examples of things that He would shake and change.

1. The great commission instructs believers to go out into the world, beginning in their community with an emphasis on the poor, and in love to confront the lost with the gospel. Today in most Western church bodies,

evangelism consists of inviting the lost to church. Here they experience a user-friendly gospel message in an entertaining atmosphere of programs designed to increase church membership. Great change is coming!

2. There is only one church, the body of Christ, which includes all true believers. They are one body because they have been baptized into Christ by the one Holy Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:4-6). Jesus gave His glory to the church so that believers would be one in Him (John 17:22-23). Today the church has become divided into many autonomous religious institutions. These bodies are identified through their emphasis in doctrine, charisma of leaders and church structure. Principles of ecumenism have replaced unity in the Spirit. Reality of one body in Christ is only possible where the Lordship and headship of Christ fully exists. God will generally shake His church to remove such failures through tribulation and persecution. This truth is expressed by the following scriptures: 2 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Peter 4:12-13; James 1:2-4; Romans 8:18.

3. The concept of two classes of believers, namely clergy and laity, will eventually be shaken and removed. Every believer in the body of Christ has been foreknown and called by God to fill a unique place of service. The glory of God will be seen in the church when Christ is head over all things in the assembly. Body ministry confirms the priesthood of all believers.

4. God will shake and remove the controlling influence of leaders who rule the flock. He will raise up bond-servants who lead by example; men who seek accountability in plurality and team relationships. True apostolic ministries will arise from such men. The headship of Christ will replace the hierarchical structure of leaders. He is head over all things in His church.

5. Many things that may appear insignificant will be shaken and removed for they can mask the glory to come. Some examples are: titles, offices, and agendas that promote the pride of man.

- Verse 28

Therefore since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe.

There are two realities in a kingdom. First, there must be a king, and secondly, there must be a domain over which the king rules. In the kingdom that is promised to believers, Jesus is the King; and His domain is everywhere that He reigns. The church is being built, but the kingdom is being extended as the church preaches the gospel of the kingdom to nations. God has decreed that His Son, with the church, will rule over His kingdom (He-

brews 1:8; 2:5-11; Daniel 7:27). The government will rest on His shoulders. The church is being built on the foundation of Christ for her future role. The centrality of Christ is essential. God has put all things in subjection under His feet. He must be head over all things in the church if she is to express His fulness (Ephesians 1:22-23).

Since the kingdom cannot be shaken, the church will be shaken until all that hides the glory of God is removed. His glory is key to the final harvest of the nations into the church.

*For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you and **His glory will appear upon you**. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. (Isaiah 60:2-3)*

- Verse 29

. . . for our God is a consuming fire.

If, for whatever reason, one does not respond to God's shaking in this life, when that believer passes away into the presence of the Lord in heaven, all of his work of wood, hay and straw will be destroyed by the fire of God. This will not concern his salvation; it only relates to what has been built on the foundation of Christ in that person's church life. There will be nothing in the kingdom that can be shaken. It will either be removed while in the church on earth or later in heaven. Works of gold, silver and precious stones reflect God's glory.

*Now if anyone builds on the foundation (Christ) with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident, for the day will show it because it is to be revealed by fire, **and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work**. If any man's work which he has built on it (the foundation) remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)*

Conclusion

God shook the earth and revealed His glory when He gave the Law to Moses. He also revealed His glory in dwelling places prepared for Him in Israel (the Tabernacle and Temples). This was a type or shadow of His ultimate purpose to reveal the fulness of His glory in the house that He is building in the New Testament.

To realize how the Lord will bring forth His glory in the end-time church, one must first understand the divine order of the early church. This order is revealed in the New Testament epistles which show that godly apostles laid a foundation for each church on God's cornerstone, the Lord Jesus Christ. Each assembly was built as a local expression of the body of Christ and was overseen by a collegial group of elders assisted by deacons (1 Peter 5:1-3; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-10). Jesus was the Shepherd and head over all things in the church (Ephesians 1:22-23). Each believer was disciplined in the purpose of God being taught to know and to fulfill his call in God (Romans 12; Ephesians 4:1-7). Apostles traveled between churches to teach, establish and counsel believers; they also were mentoring young apostles (e.g. Timothy and Titus).

When the first apostles passed away, there arose pressure from certain leaders, led by Ignatius, to have one man in charge of each church. The office of Bishop was invented, an overseer with supreme authority for the spiritual life of that church.¹

Their error was believing that an office and title could replace the authority that comes from God's anointing and character in ministry. Bishops slowly replaced the apostles. The centrality of Christ was no longer primary in the life of the church. The office of Bishop opened the door to other new levels of hierarchical authority over the years, and the church slowly sank into the apostasy of the Dark Ages. Churches had become institutional in structure and function.

The reformation, which began in the days of Martin Luther, continues until the present time. The shakings which lie before us will continue until all that the hand of man has built into the church is removed.

Jesus is returning in glory for a victorious, overcoming church. Therefore, look beyond the shakings, and focus on the glory that is to come.

References

1. J.B. Lightfoot, J.R. Harmer, M. Holmes; The Apostolic Fathers; Baker Book House Co., 1989

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