

Shaking Heaven and Earth

Hebrews 12:26-27

My grandmother gave me a letter from A.W. Pink to my grandfather. My granddad had written to Pink and requested a copy of Pink's book, *Redeemer's Return*. Mr. Pink wrote back (Feb 7, 1948) and said, *"My 'Redeemer's Return' is quite unobtainable—out of print for many years. It was written 30 years ago, in the days of my spiritual infancy, when I received without question the teaching of older men. For 40 years I have studied Prophecy, and today it's my firm conviction that most of what has been written was guesswork. My advice: Leave Prophecy alone. Concentrate on the practical portions of the Word!!"*

I do not necessarily agree with A.W. Pink. The prophecies of Scripture are what make the Bible unique. However, some Christians take prophecies regarding *the end of the Old Covenant* and twist them into prophecies about the end of the world. This is a grave mistake and causes much unnecessary confusion. The writer of Hebrews says that God is about to shake the heavens and the earth and will remove them.

I. "Heaven and the earth" is a biblical expression referring to God's covenant with Israel.

When God called the Hebrews as His own people He said, "I have put My words in your mouth and have covered you with the shadow of My hand to establish the heavens, to found the earth, and to say, 'You are My people'" (Is. 51:16). Throughout the OT, Israel is compared to heaven and earth.

A. God gave Israel the Law and He "shook the earth," that is He shook the people of Israel.

The writer of Hebrews says, "His voice shook the earth then (Mt. Sinai) ..." v. 26. The Hebrews heard God speak at Sinai and *they* trembled. His voice (the Law) was holiness and pure justice.

B. God spoke to Israel in the Old Testament and He spoke to heaven and earth.

"Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; let the earth hear the words of my mouth" (Deut. 32:1).
 "Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the Lord speaks, 'Sons have I reared and brought up, but they have revolted against Me'" (Isaiah 1:2).

C. God said Israel's covenant with Him would one day be destroyed.

This covenant, called the Old Covenant, revolved around the Temple, the Temple rituals, the Temple sacrifices, and the Temple priesthood. This Temple of the Covenant was in Jerusalem. Do you remember how Jesus prophesied the Temple's destruction? (Turn to Matthew 24:1-3). Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in a generation. It came in 70 AD. **"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away"** said Christ (Matt. 24:35).

II. "Shaking heaven and earth" is God removing the Old Covenant and replacing it with the New.

This is the message of the writer of Hebrews in vs. 26-27. God is removing heaven and earth, the covenant He has with Israel in order that He might institute an everlasting agreement with sinners. The encouragement of Heb. 12:26-27 is "Don't put your faith in those things that can be shaken!" In the New Agreement, God speaks to us through Christ's blood and shouts "Forgiveness" and He speaks to us through Christ's life and shouts "Righteousness." We must simply believe Him. The differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant are numerous.

1. The Old was for the Jews, but the New is for Jews and Gentiles, the entire world.
2. The Old brought God's blessings by obedience; the New brings God's blessings through faith.
3. The Old was a covenant written on stone; the New is a covenant written on the heart.
4. The Old was a covenant that ministered death; the New is a covenant that makes one alive.
5. The Old was filled with authoritative leaders; the New is filled with humble servants.

The Person of Christ is the Lawgiver of the New Covenant. The life of Christ is in the soul of the believer. Hear Him. Listen to Him. The Old had Elijah and Moses. The New has come with Christ.