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WHEN CHRIST WILL SHAKE THE EARTH

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 131
HEBREWS 12:24-26

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Before we begin this study of some new exciting things, let us get a corrected translation of verses 22-24.

Verse 22

"But you have come to Mt. Zion, even to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to the myriads of angels in festive convocation."

Verse 23

"Also to the church of the firstborn ones (The Royal Family members) who have been registered in heaven, and to God the evaluator of all, and to the spirits of justified ones, who have been perfected."

Verse 24

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new contract, and to the blood of sprinkling which commemorates better things than Abel's sacrifice."

We have studied in detail everything except that last part of verse 24.

Better Things Than Abel's Sacrifice

Abel is the first Old Testament believer who was born. Adam and Eve were believers also but they were not born, they were created. So Abel is the first believer who was ever born into the world. He is named here because he became the pattern for Old Testament saints. Now we, in the Church Age, have something far better than Abel and the Old Testament saints. "Better things" refer to the efficacious sacrifice and the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and session of Jesus Christ. This is the event that interrupted the Jewish Age and called out the new family of God. This brought the baptism of the Holy Spirit for every believer and many other things that had never existed before.

Look at a list of these "better things."

1. Every believer baptized by the Holy Spirit.
2. Every believer a priest for the first time.
3. Every believer given a spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit.
4. Every believer in union with Christ. This was never true before
5. These "better things" are the golden glory of the Church Age where every believer is an ambassador for Christ. This is why we are accurate when we say that the Church Age is the greatest age of all.

HEBREWS 12:25 "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:" This is a challenge for the believer to come away from Mt. Sinai and come to Mt. Zion. This word "see" is the present, active, imperative of blepo and is better translated "beware." They understood the gospel and had had every opportunity to accept it. This is the final great warning that they not turn their backs on the gospel. The word "refuse" is the aorist, middle, subjunctive of paraiteomai. This is a constative aorist and gathers up into one whole all the repeated opportunities

they had to hear the gospel. They, themselves, had had these opportunities over and over again. The subjunctive is used with the negative to present a prohibition. "Him" is from the personal pronoun ton and refers to Jesus Christ. "That speaketh" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ who communicated the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai as well as the message of grace in the gospels. This is a present, active, participle. This is an historical present, dealing with an historical event with the reality of a present occurrence. So this phrase says, "Beware that you do not reject the one that is communicating." Now the illustration is going to be introduced by gar translated "for." Then we have ei and this introduces a first class condition. Next we have an aorist, active, indicative of ekpheugo plus the negative ouk. So this says, "For if they have not escaped." They did not escape in the past and neither will they escape now. Those who rejected the message in Moses' day did not escape and they will not escape in 67 A.D. Any time anyone rejects the grace of God, disaster always awaits him. These believers in Jerusalem in 67 A.D. would not escape anymore than Moses' generation did not escape. The 5th cycle of discipline came to the Jews in Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and it will come again in 70 A.D. One is reminded of Hebrews 2:3-4, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" These who have rejected the acceptance of doctrine are caught up in this historical catastrophe.

The Whirlwind Of History

This first class condition is presenting this whirlwind of history. If a nation refuses to heed the Word of God, then the whirlwind overtakes him. As goes the believers, so will go the nation. The whirlwind of history operates in many ways. Economic depression brings starvation. A turning to socialism and a play-down of the military brings a loss of freedom and eventually a loss of the nation. In keeping our freedom the most important thing in all the world is what does the Word of God say? If we heed the Word of God, then the world can be turned around. Paul died the year this epistle was written. Nero died one year after it was written, and in the last year of his life, he declared open war on the Jews. God even used a wicked Nero to bring discipline to the Jews, trying to warn them before it was too late.

We Live Near This Whirlwind Today

In our own nation we are living very close to this whirlwind. God's discipline may fall on this nation in this decade of the eighties. God always uses his whirlwind to bring discipline to a disobedient nation. You may be prosperous and everything may appear to be going your way, but the whirlwind may set in tomorrow. DO NOT BUILD YOUR DOCTRINE ON CIRCUMSTANCES. Draw your doctrine from the Word of God. Circumstances may change tomorrow and once the whirlwind sets in, it is indeed terrible.

This passage says that the whirlwind comes suddenly. "They" is from ekeinos and this refers to the Jews of the days of Moses at Sinai. The whirlwind of history overtook them. "Who refused" is the aorist, active, participle of paraiteomai. This aorist tense gathers up into one ball all the negative volition that went into their repeated refusals to obey God and listen to him. Next we have "him that spake" and this

is a present, active, participle of chrematizo and not laleo. This word chrematizo means to utter divine oracles. This is an historical present and sees an historical event with the intensity of a present occurrence. "On the earth" simply gives the locating of where this whirlwind took place.

Much Greater Punishment

We have polu mallon and this should be translated "to a much greater degree." If there is a saturation of doctrine, then the responsibility is even greater. This "we" shows that the writer here is identifying himself with the Jews of Jerusalem in 67 A.D. If in past generations, God has punished reversionism, he will be even more intense in his punishment now because of the added light we have had in the gospel. "If we turn away" is a present, middle, participle of apostrepho and should be translated "to repudiate." This is to repudiate the only way of peace and prosperity for a nation. This participle is a conditional participle so we translate it "if we repudiate." "If we, ourselves, repudiate him that speaketh from heaven." This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ who had been seated for 37 years at the right hand of God. You see, it had been 37 years since he ascended in 30 A.D. and this is now 67 A.D. He is recording the names in that heavenly register and now he is presented as speaking from heaven.

So Verse 25 says,

"Beware that you do not reject the one who is speaking. For if they (The generation of Jews at Sinai) have not escaped when they rejected the one who communicated divine oracles on earth, to a much greater degree, we shall not escape if we ourselves reject the one from heaven (Namely, The Lord Jesus Christ)."

HEBREWS 12:26 "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Here we have one more reference to our Lord Jesus Christ where salvation is related to judgment. Propitiation is designed by God to save mankind and God has designed this plan in such a way that his character will not be compromised. Righteousness and justice were propitiated by the cross. If this propitiation is rejected, then God's righteousness and justice will judge the one who rejects. The Lake of Fire is God's guarantee that he will be fair and will not allow his righteousness and justice to be compromised. This is another guarantee of our eternal security. This verse says that God will keep his character from compromise.

Next we have "Then shook the earth" and this refers to the time the Ten Commandments were given. The word "then" is from tote and it goes back to Mt. Sinai. The relative pronoun hos is referring to the voice of Jesus Christ. The word for "voice" is phone and it refers to a voice that utters words that could be understood. (In fact, they were understood so clearly the people cried out for him to stop because they couldn't stand to hear anymore.) Now we have the word "shook" and this is an aorist, active, indicative of saleuo and this is the word used in scripture for earthquakes or earth tremors. We stay on this earth in response to a divine law, we call it gravity. The earth is spinning but we don't fall off.

We read of this in Exodus 19:18, "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." This is an event of historical reality. It is a well

documented event of human history. The next words we have are "but now" and this means we jump from 1441 B.C. to 67 A.D. They were on the eve of a great coming disaster. "He hath promised" is the perfect, middle, indicative of epaggello. This is a dramatic perfect and ties in with something that will come in the future.

HAGGAI 2:6 "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;" This is a prophetic statement that ties in with what we have here in Hebrews. Haggai is predicting something that will occur the second advent of Christ and at the time he will regather Israel.

This word "saying" in Hebrews 12:26 sets the stage for this quotation from Haggai 2:6. It says, "Thus sayeth the Lord of the armies once more, in a little while, I am going to shake the heaven and the earth, the sea also and the dry land."

You can see why this scripture was quoted at this time. There was an earthquake on Mt. Sinai and this introduced the fact of the historical disaster which came to the Jews. The earthquake on Mt. Sinai warned them of the coming national disaster. The Sinai alumni, with the exception of four, lived to see this carried out during the next 39 years in the desert after 1441 B.C. That disaster on Mt. Sinai is just a little evidence of the terrible disaster which will come to the whole earth at the end of the Tribulation when Christ returns to this earth and wins the great battle at Armageddon. So we have the words "yet once more" from eti hapax. This refers to an event that will come only once. Then we have the future, active, indicative of saleuo. It is a future event that is coming and refers to Revelation 6:12-17.

A Review Of Revelation 6

Revelation 6 is the key to the entire book of Revelation. This chapter is a summary of the whole book. As each seal is broken, a different phase of the Tribulation is revealed.

Look at these seals--

Seal No. 1 This is the rider of the white horse. This is the Dictator of the Revived Roman Empire and he is going to set out in the Tribulation to conquer the whole world. This is Revelation 6:1-2.

Seal No. 2 This is the Red Horse of War. This is the principle of warfare which will be the dominant idea during the Tribulation. (Revelation 6:3-4)

Seal No. 3 This is the Black Horse of Famine. It is a time of great economic distress. (Revelation 6:5-6)

Seal No. 4 This is the pale horse, the ashen horse of death. Millions will be killed in the Tribulation. (Revelation 6:7-8)

The picture changes and we will now see believers.

Seal No. 5 These are the prayers of the martyrs and these martyrs were given robes of righteousness. (Revelation 6:10-11)

And now in the 6th Seal we are going to find a description of the fulfillment of Haggai 2:6-7. (In my Revelation papers, I call this "When The Sun Refused to Shine.") As each seal is broken, another phase of the Tribulation is revealed. Therefore, this 6th Seal is of special

interest to us . This is a way the Jews wrote. They would summarize something, and then give the details later. All the rest of Revelation, chapters 7-22, is given to explain what has been summarized here in Revelation 6.

The Sun Refused To Shine

This is a very supernatural day, a very significant day in world history. It is characterized by supernatural darkness on the earth. We pick this up in these passages--Isaiah 13:9-10, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Joel 2:10-11 and 3:15, Amos 5:18 and Zechariah 14:6. This is a supernatural darkness that will cover the entire earth. There will be earthquakes and meteors will shower the earth. So this is the fulfillment of Haggai 2:6.

"For thus sayeth the Lord of the armies (This is a title for Jesus Christ) once more, in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land." Rev. 6:12-17 is a fulfillment of these words.

In Rev. 6 we read of John "And I looked." This is one of the most amazing sights God ever let anybody see. God threw on the screen of heaven these future events for John to see so he could write them down for us. The sun became black and the moon as blood.

REVELATION 6:14 "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places" This is God's description of the whirlwind judgment that will come at the Second Advent.

REVELATION 6:15 "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;" This is the reaction of the people. The kings and leaders and human celebrities and rich men and military leaders and the slaves and the free men will hide themselves in the mountains.

REVELATION 6:16 "And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:" They will call for the rocks to fall on them. They are said to be fleeing from "The wrath of the Lamb." We have seen the Lamb before as speaking salvation.

JOHN 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This is the Lamb who is bringing wrath. This is the beginning of the baptism of fire.

REVELATION 6:17 "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" The answer to this question is this--"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." These are the ones who can stand in that day. These are the ones who will live in the Millennium with Christ.

So look again at Hebrews 12:26.

"Whose voice at that time in Mt. Sinai shook the earth: now he himself hath promised, yet once more and I will shake not only the earth but heaven also."