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Email: info@austin-sparks.net

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## Is the Great "Shaking" at Hand?

*by T. Austin-Sparks*

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"Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heavens". Hebrews 12:26-27.

There is no doubt that the Letter to the Hebrews was a supreme effort to get Christian believers detached from an earthly form of Christianity, and attached to Christ in heaven. That effort had as one of its strong reasons the fact that a great shaking was foretold, foreseen, and imminent. That shaking was to be in two parts, an earlier and a latter; an entirely earthly, and an earthly and heavenly combined. The effect of the shaking, and, indeed, the purpose of it, would be to test everything as to abiding values. The former and earthly shaking was Jewish, but it had all the elements in principle and type of the latter.

In the destruction of Jerusalem - toward which the Letter pointed - the whole earth was shaken so far as Jewry was concerned. The Temple, as the focal point of that whole world, crashed even with the ground. The priesthood, as gathered up in the high-priestly order, passed away. The temple service ended, and the nation ceased to be an integrate and unified people.

These were things capable of being removed. And yet how long they had stood! What forces they had withstood! What confidence there was that they could never cease to be! How assured they were that God was so bound up with it all that it could never be destroyed and cease to be! How they fought and clung to it to the last terrible extremity! But it was of no avail. God was no longer wanting the framework and earthly system, which had taken so much room, and energy, and expenditure, before the really spiritual was reached. The percentage of spiritual value was so small after all, and spiritual interests lay so far along the labyrinthine ways of religious machinery and tradition, that it was not worthwhile. The means to the end was not immediate that is, there was far too big a distance between the means and the end. There was no *immediate* touch with the real

Divine requirement, but there was far too much that was intermediate. And so it had to go, and, rather than preserve it, God Himself shook it.

What remained after the shaking was just that, and that only, which was Christ in a spiritual and heavenly way: Christ in heaven, and here by His Spirit, the gathering point, or occasion of assembling; Christ in heaven the High Priest and Sacrifice; the order of God's home a purely spiritual and heavenly one - not formal, arranged, imposed, imitated, or material. Order grows out of life, and if that life is Divine and unchecked, Divine order will be spontaneous.

"He taketh away the first that he may establish the second".

But a further and greater shaking is to come, and we are asking whether this is not imminent. Everything points to it being so. We have been very conscious of the restraining hand being upon world affairs for some time. The worst has seemed to be possible again and again, but it has been suspended in a way which has suggested a Hand more than that of man's. It is not difficult to see what would happen to all the outward aspects of Christian work and life, given the withdrawal of that Hand.

Is God going to shake in a way unparalleled, so that the framework and organised structure of things Christian is totally suspended, and only that which is the true knowledge of Himself and the real measure of Christ remains? Such a possibility only (it is more than that) should make His people, and especially His servants, look to it that they are in immediate touch with the eternal and spiritual factors; that there is a minimum of that which must go in the shaking, and a maximum of that which will abide. We must get away from the outward to the inward: from the earthly to the heavenly: from the destructible to the indestructible: from the means to the end - the full measure of Christ.