

# Hebrews 12:25-26 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
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 Swindoll's Chart, Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews, Another Chart

| <b>The Epistle<br/>to the Hebrews</b>            |  |                                  |   |                |
|--|--|----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>INSTRUCTION</b><br>Hebrews 1-10:18            |  |                                  | <b>EXHORTATION</b><br>Hebrews 10:19-13:25         |                |
| Superior Person<br>of Christ<br>Hebrews 1:1-4:13 | Superior Priest<br>in Christ<br>Hebrews 4:14-10:18 |                                  | Superior Life<br>In Christ<br>Hebrews 10:19-13:25 |                |
| BETTER THAN<br>PERSON<br>Hebrews 1:1-4:13        | BETTER<br>PRIESTHOOD<br>Heb 4:14-7:28              | BETTER<br>COVENANT<br>Heb 8:1-13 | BETTER<br>SACRIFICE<br>Heb 9:1-10:18              | BETTER<br>LIFE |

|                              |                          |                            |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| MAJESTY<br>OF<br>CHRIST      | MINISTRY<br>OF<br>CHRIST | MINISTERS<br>FOR<br>CHRIST |
| DOCTRINE                     |                          | DUTY                       |
| DATE WRITTEN:<br>ca. 64-68AD |                          |                            |

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(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 12:25 **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**. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Blepete \(2PPAM\)](#) [me paraitesesthe \(2PAMS\)](#) [ton lalounta;](#) ([PAPMSA](#)) [ei gar ekeinoi ouk](#) ecephugon (2PAAI) [epi ges paraitesameno](#)i ([AMPMPN](#)) [ton chrematizonta,](#) ([PAPMSA](#)) [polu mallon emeis oi ton ap' ouranon apostrophomenoi;](#) ([PMPMPN](#))

**Amplified:** So see to it that you do not reject Him or refuse to listen to and heed Him Who is speaking [to you now]. For if they [the Israelites] did not escape when they refused to listen and heed Him Who warned and divinely instructed them [here] on earth [revealing with heavenly warnings His will], how much less shall we escape if we reject and turn our backs on Him Who cautions and admonishes [us] from heaven? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**HCSB:** Make sure that you do not reject the One who speaks. For if they did not escape when they rejected Him who warned them on earth, even less will we if we turn away from Him who warns us from heaven.

**NLT:** See to it that you obey God, the one who is speaking to you. For if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses, the earthly messenger, how terrible our danger if we reject the One who speaks to us from heaven! ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Wuest:** Constantly be seeing to it that ye do not disavow Him who is speaking. For if, as is the case, those did not escape who disavowed Him that warned (them) upon earth, much rather shall not we escape who are turning away from the One who is speaking from heaven.

**Young's Literal:** See, may ye not refuse him who is speaking, for if those did not escape who refused him who upon earth was divinely speaking -- much less we who do turn away from him who speaketh from heaven,

**SEE TO IT THAT YOU DO NOT REFUSE HIM WHO IS SPEAKING:** [Blepete \(2PPAM\)](#) [me paraitesesthe \(2PAMS\)](#) [ton lalounta](#) ([PAPMSA](#)):

- **See to it** - He 8:5 Ex 16:29 1Ki 12:16 Isa 48:6 64:9 Mt 8:4 1Th 5:15 1Pe 1:22 Rev 19:10 22:9
- **refuse:** Pr 1:24, 8:33, 13:18, 15:32 Jer 11:10 Eze 5:6 Zec 7:11 Mt 17:5 Ac 7:35
- Hebrew 12 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 12:25-29 Great Privileges, Great God, Great Responsibilities](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 12:18-29 Mount Sinai or Mount Zion?](#) - John MacArthur

**See to it** (991)(blepo) (This verb is a **key word** in Hebrews - Heb 2:9-note, Heb 3:12-note, Heb 3:19-note, Heb 10:25-note, Heb 11:1-note, Heb 11:7-note, Heb 12:25) in Greek writings from Aeschylus down means to see or discern. In contrast to being blind it means to be able to see. Figuratively it speaks of spiritual perception. It means to take in the sight of something and so to look at or observe. To process information by giving thought or directing one's attention to something. As used in this verse it means to pay especially close attention to something, especially regarding something that is needed or is hazardous (watch, beware of). **Blepo** is a command in the **present imperative** calling for continual close attention - when God speaks the readers (and us) are to pay attention!

**Spurgeon** writes "**see to it**" means they are to "be very circumspect that by no means, accidental or otherwise, you refuse the Christ of God, who now in the gospel speaks to you. Be watchful, be earnest, lest even through inadvertence you should refuse the prophet of the gospel dispensation—Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who speaks in the gospel from heaven to the sons of men." It means, "Give earnest heed and careful attention that by no means and in no way you refuse Him who speaks."

Jeremiah 11:10 alludes to the first generation (out of Egypt) refusing God's Word - "They (those of Judah in Jeremiah's day) have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who **refused to hear My words**, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers." (Comment: Notice the decline - Refuse God, turn to sin, seek idols, serve idols and break covenant!)

Compare other OT prophets...

Ezekiel 5:6 But she has **rebelled against My ordinances** more wickedly than the nations and against My statutes more than the lands which surround her; for **they have rejected My ordinances** and have not walked in My statutes.'

Zechariah 7:11 "But they **refused to pay attention**, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing.

**Proverbs** repeated warns against refusing divine declaration...

Pr 1:24 "Because I called, and you refused; I stretched out my hand, and no one paid attention;

Pr 8:33 "Heed instruction and be wise, And do not neglect [it.]

Pr 13:18 Poverty and shame [will come] to him who neglects discipline, But he who regards reproof will be honored.

Pr 15:32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.

**Refuse** (3868) (**paraiteomai** from **pará** = aside and in this word gives a nuance of aversion or repudiation + **aitéo** = ask, beg) is literally to ask along side. Wuest writes **paraiteomai** means "to deprecate, to prevent the consequences of an act by protesting against and disavowing it, to decline, refuse, avoid." To seek to turn aside by asking. As in Mark 15:6, this verb can mean to beg or request (a prisoner to be freed on the occasion of the Passover). In Luke 14:18, it conveys the sense of to **beg off** or of wanting to be excused from a positive response, in this verse one excusing himself for not accepting a wedding invitation. Finally, in the pastoral epistles (1,2 Timothy, Titus - see below), the meaning is to decline, refuse, to refuse to pay attention to, to shun, to avoid, to reject. In secular Greek a wrestler was declared the victor when his opponents **declined** to engage him upon seeing his unclothed physique.

The combination (paraiteisthai tina) is an idiom meaning to refuse or "dis" (disregard) someone. It connotes a deliberate and culpable refusal to listen to the one speaking. According to Dt 5:23-24 it was God who spoke to Israel, not Moses. -- And it came about, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. And you said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives. (Dt 5:23)

**Spurgeon** - That which Jesus speaks concerns your soul, concerns your everlasting destiny. It is God's wisdom; God's way of mercy; God's plan by which you may be saved. If this were a secondary matter, you need not be so earnest about receiving it, but of all things under heaven, nothing so concerns you as the Gospel. See, then, that you do not refuse this precious Word, more precious than gold or rubies—which alone can save your souls. If you drank poison and did not know it, I could pity you. If you made all your veins to swell with agony, and caused your death...But when we stand up and say, "It is poison! See others drop and die; do not touch it!" When we give you something a thousand times better, and ask you to take it, but you will not take it, but will have the poison—then if you will, you must. If, then, you would destroy your soul, it must be so. But we would plead with you: "**Watch out that you do not refuse the one who is speaking.**"

Him Who is speaking - Speaking is in the present tense which "shows durative action in the original, denoting something that is going on. The phrase "Him that speaketh" refers back to Jesus, the mediator of the New Testament whose blood speaks of better things than the sacrificial blood which Abel shed. It is Messiah speaking to these first-century Jews by means of His blood." (Wuest)

The writer has already insisted that it was God's voice that Israel subsequently chose to disregard in the wilderness (see Heb 3:7-9-note; Heb 3:10-11-note ; Heb 3:16-17-note; Heb 3:18-note ). But in a sense Moses was the mediator when he spoke and since he spoke for God as His prophet the distinction is somewhat inconsequential.

Since believers in Christ now possess such enormous resources for living as those just described, it is of the utmost importance to

act in accordance with them. Truth simply understood is never acceptable in and of itself; it is truth done that counts! So, for the fifth time in this epistle, the author warns against turning back from the truth they have learned as professing Christians to a more comfortable and less demanding life in Judaism or to an accommodation to the unbelieving lifestyles around them. The form of the statement recalls Heb 3:12-note, where the imperative blepete, "**Be careful,**" followed by a negative particle, introduced a strong warning against apostasy.

This warning takes us back to the first warning of (Heb 2:1-2-note ; Heb 2:3-note). In Heb 2:1-note the Hebrews were in danger of drifting away from that which they had heard; Heb 12:2 they also stand in peril of refusing him who speaks. Heb 2:2-note reminded that violations of the law received immediate punishment; Heb 12:25 they are also told that those who refused the One who gave commandments from the mountain did not escape. There the question confronted them: Heb 2:3-note "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" Hebrews 12:25 the question of the first warning is now made a declarative statement: We are even less likely to escape, if we turn away from God Who warns us from heaven.

### **Are you refusing God?**

#### **Has he been speaking to you, but you have been ignoring his word?**

What folly! His word is effectual, and it is final.

Jesus is speaking (see Heb 1:2-note, Heb 2:1 notes , Heb 2:1-2-note ; Heb 2:3-note, cp Heb 3:7-note, Heb 3:16-note). Those who disobeyed the voice of God as it was heard in the law were punished accordingly. Heb 2:2-note When privilege is greater, responsibility is also greater. In Christ, God has given His best and final revelation. Those who reject His voice as it now speaks from heaven in the gospel are more responsible than those who broke the law. Escape is impossible.

**Spurgeon** on he **who is speaking** - There is not a word of that which He speaks except what is love to your souls. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did not come armed with terrors to work wrath among the sons of men. All was mercy, all was grace, and to those who listen to Him He has nothing to speak but tenderness and lovingkindness: your sins shall be forgiven; God will wink at the time of your ignorance; your transgressions shall be cast into the depths of the sea; for you there shall be happiness on earth, and glory hereafter. Who would not listen when there is good news to be heard? Who would not listen when the best tidings that God Himself ever sent forth from the excellent glory is proclaimed by the noblest Ambassador who ever spoke to men, namely, God's own Son, Jesus, the once crucified, but now exalted Savior?

**FOR IF THOSE DID NOT ESCAPE WHEN THEY REFUSED HIM WHO WARNED THEM ON EARTH: ei gar ekeinoi ouk exephugon (3PAAI) epi ges paraitesamenoï (AMPMPN) ton chrematizonta (PAPMSA):**

- **If those** - Heb 2:1-3, 3:17, 10:28,29
- Hebrew 12 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 12:25-29 Great Privileges, Great God, Great Responsibilities](#)- Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 12:18-29 Mount Sinai or Mount Zion?](#) - John MacArthur

### **A SOLEMN, STRIKING COMPARISON**

If men were held accountable for heeding God when He warned them on earth, from Mt Sinai, how much more will they be held accountable now that He warns from heaven, from Mount Zion? This is not the first time the writer has spoken with this severe "tone"...

Heb 2:1-3 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away [from it.] 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

Heb 10:28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

**For (gar)** again is a strategic **term of explanation** which we do well to pause and wonder, asking at least "**What is the writer explaining?**"

**Those - Who is those?** In context clearly this refers to the Jews who came out of Egypt with Moses and who received Jehovah's

commandments at Mount Sinai.

**Escape** (1628)(**ekpheugo**) means to move quickly from a point or area in order to avoid presumed danger or difficulty. To flee out or away, to run or move hastily from danger because of fear.

**Spurgeon** - I believe that the Holy Ghost often, by what we call the common operations that He exercises upon the hearts of men, deals with men's consciences so far as to arouse and warn them, but they quench the Spirit. They, as Stephen says, resist the Spirit as their fathers also did (Acts 7:51). It is a sin that may be committed; and where it is committed often, and long, at last, the Holy Dove departs never to return, and such a soul is given up.

**Warned** (5537) (**chrematizo** [also in Heb 8:5-note, Heb 11:7-note] from **chrema** = an affair, business) means first to transact business, esp. to manage public affairs and in this context to impart a divine message or make known a divine warning by giving a message.

**Wuest** on **chrematizo** - This word was used in the classics of the response given those who consulted an oracle. In the Bible it is used of the act of giving a divine command or admonition, or of the act of teaching from heaven. It refers here to the act of God in admonishing and warning the people.

It is clear that the warning passages envision the same peril—that apathy toward spiritual matters and complacency with a religious lifestyle falls far short of what God requires and has made full provision for. But such complacency cannot go unjudged forever. It actually constitutes a refusal of God's grace, a turning of one's back on truth and deliverance. This is where some, if not many, of the recipients of this letter now stand. The last three warnings particularly (Hebrews 6:4-6-note; Heb 10:26-31-note and here) envision a deliberate and final rejection of the new covenant as the greatest danger.

The shaking and terrifying "divine fireworks display" at Mount Sinai was designed to arouse serious consideration of the demands of the Law to the watching Israelites. Since such "earthly" shaking was not sufficient to gain their full attention, a greater shaking is yet to come. But this shaking will be not merely of earth but of earth and heaven!

**MUCH LESS SHALL WE ESCAPE WHO TURN AWAY FROM HIM WHO WARNS FROM HEAVEN: polu mallon hemeis oi ton ap ouranon apostrephomenoi: (PMPMPN) polu mallon hemeis oi ton ap ouranon apostrephomenoi: (PMPMPN):**

- **Turn away** - Nu 32:15 Dt 30:17 Jos 22:16 2Ch 7:19 Pr 1:32 2Ti 4:4
- Hebrew 12 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 12:25-29 Great Privileges, Great God, Great Responsibilities](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 12:18-29 Mount Sinai or Mount Zion?](#) - John MacArthur

**Much less shall we escape** - Don't be deceived. They did not escape! Neither will we if we turn away!

**Spurgeon** - It seems to me that if it be so, that God Himself has taken upon Himself human form, and has come here to effect our redemption from our sin and misery, there cannot be any reason that will stand a moment's looking at for refusing Him who speaks. It must be my duty and my privilege to hear what it is that God has got to say to me. It must be my duty to lend Him all my heart to try and understand what it is that He says, and then to give Him all my will to do, or to be whatever He would have me to do or to be.

**Turning away** is a frequent "theme" in the OT...

Numbers 32:15 "For if you **turn away** from following Him, He will once more abandon them in the wilderness; and you will destroy all these people."

Deuteronomy 30:17 "But if your **heart turns away** and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, (**Note the progression when one's heart grows "cold"!**)

Joshua 22:16 "Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, 'What is this unfaithful act which you (For context and who is being addressed see Josh 22:13-15) have committed against the God of Israel, **turning away** from following the LORD this day, by building yourselves an altar, to rebel against the LORD this day?"

2 Chronicles 7:19 (THE CONDITION) "But if you **turn away** and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you and shall go and serve other gods and worship them, (THE PROMISED CONSEQUENCE -2Chr 7:20) "then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples."

Proverbs 1:32 "For the **waywardness** (Heb = meshubah = turning back, apostasy from "shub" = to turn back) of the naive shall kill them, And the complacency of fools shall destroy them.

What were they turning to? **Wuest** comments that this "speaks of the turning away of some of these Hebrews from the Messiah, back to the temple sacrifices, which was in progress at the time of the writing of this letter. God spoke on earth at Sinai in the sense that He spoke through angels who had been sent by Him. He speaks from heaven in that He speaks through His glorified Son."

**Turn away** (654)(**apostrepho** from **apo** = away from, a marker of dissociation, implying a rupture from a former association and indicates separation, departure, cessation, reversal + **strepho** = turn quite around, twist, reverse, turn oneself about) in the active sense means cause one to change one's belief, to mislead from proper belief or to cause someone to turn away from a previous belief. To cause to turn away (apo). To turn away from allegiance. As used in this verse the reflexive middle voice means to turn oneself away from and the present tense pictures this as their lifestyle, their continual practice (not a one time event).

Paul used **apostrepho** in this way earlier to remind Timothy "You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia **turned away from** (apostrepho) me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes." (2Ti 1:15-note) And in some of his last written words to Timothy, Paul warned that many would choose teachers who tickled their ears and "and **will turn away** (apostrepho = they make a volitional choice to turn away from truth!) their ears from the truth and **will turn aside** (passive voice = they will be turned aside!) to myths. (2Ti 4:4-note).

Paul instructs Titus to warn the saints on Crete not to be "paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men (false teachers) who **turn away from** (apostrepho) the truth. (Titus 1:14-note)

**Comment:** These false teachers in the Cretan churches clearly had been exposed to the truth otherwise they could not have turned away from it, and later rejected the truth in favor of man made myths, precepts, and traditions.

**Calvin** - Christ does not do away with the sins of the faithful so that they are free to sin; he makes them new people.

**Wuest** adds that **apostrepho** conveys "the idea of **averting**." (Webster = **avert**: to turn away or aside (as the eyes or ears) in avoidance") That is, those who follow these heretics, not only turn away their ears from the truth, but see to it that their ears are always in such a position that they will never come in contact with the truth, like a country windmill whose owner has turned its vanes so that they will not catch the wind. Notice the active voice of the verb "turn away," and the passive voice of the verb "shall be turned." The first named action is performed by the people themselves, while in the case of the second one, they are acted upon by an outside force." Wuest goes on to draw the frightful analogy that these individuals "are in much the same condition as those under the reign of the Beast who, because they refuse to receive the love of the truth, are the victims of a strong delusion"(2Th 2:11-12). (Wuest, K. S. Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans)

This is what is called in logic an **a fortiori argument**, an argument that argues that what is true in the **lesser** case will be even more true in the **greater**.

In the lesser case, God's earthly warning at Sinai first suffered subtle refusal by the Israelites when they "begged that no further word be spoken to them" (Heb 12:19-note; cf. Ex 20:19), although their refusal there at Sinai was more from fear than from outright rejection of God. However, in the years that followed, they explicitly refused God's word by repeated disobedience during the 40 years of wilderness wandering. So grievous to the heart of God was their willful disobedience that Nu 14 records a severe judgment by God...

Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; 29 your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me. 30 'Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. (Numbers 14:28-30)

Indeed, none of Israel did escape except faithful Caleb and Joshua. A million plus corpses littered the desert.

Considering the inexorable penalty for disobeying God's earthly message, how much greater will the penalty be in the greater instance of disobeying his heavenly message of grace through His Son? (Heb 1:2-note). No one will escape (Rev 20:11-12-note)! This, of course, has been the writer's message all along. In Heb 2:3-note he warned, "How shall we escape if we neglect (are careless about, ~ nonchalant attitude toward) so great a salvation?" Later in Heb 10:28-29-note he said much the same thing, emphasizing greater punishment. It is a "done deal." No person will escape who refuses the gospel! God is a relentless consuming fire.

**Spurgeon** - **If they did not escape who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away**

**from Him who speaks from heaven.** If Pharaoh did not escape when he refused him who spoke on earth, dreadful shall be that day when the Christ who this day speaks to you, and whom you reject, shall lift up the rods of His anger. If I speak severely, even for a moment, it is in love. I dare not play with you, sinner; I dare not tell you sin is a trifle. I dare not tell you that the world to come is a matter of no great account. I dare not come and tell you that you need not be in earnest. I shall have to answer for it to my Master. I have these words ringing in my ears, "And as for the watchman, if he sees the sword coming and he does not blow the horn, and the people are not waned, and the sword comes and it takes their lives, he will be taken through his guilt, his blood from the hand of the watchman I will seek" (Ezek 33:6). Refuse what I say as much as you will. Cast anything that is mine to the dogs—have nothing to do with it. But wherein I have spoken to you Christ's Word, and I have told you His gospel—"Believe and live" (John 11:26), "The one who believes in him is not judged" (John 3:18) "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16)—wherein it is Christ's gospel, it is Christ that speaks. I again say to you, for your soul's sake, "Watch out that you do not refuse the one who is speaking" (Heb 12:25). May His Spirit sweetly incline you to listen to Christ's Word.

**Hebrews 12:26** 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."** (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** [ou e phone ten gen esaleusen \(3SAAI\) tote. nun de epeggeltai \(3SRMI\) legon. \(PAPMSN\) Eti hapax ego seiso \(1SFAI\) ou monon ten gen alla kai ton ouranon.](#)

**Amplified:** Then [at Mount Sinai] His voice shook the earth, but now He has given a promise: Yet once more I will shake and make tremble not only the earth but also the [starry] heavens. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** When God spoke from Mount Sinai his voice shook the earth, but now he makes another promise: "Once again I will shake not only the earth but the heavens also." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Wuest:** Whose voice then shook the earth: But now He has promised, this promise being on record, saying, Yet once (more) I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.

**Young's Literal:** whose voice the earth shook then, and now hath he promised, saying, 'Yet once -- I shake not only the earth, but also the heaven;'

**AND HIS VOICE SHOOK THE EARTH THEN: ou e phone ten gen esaleusen (3SAAI) tote**

- **voice:** Ex 19:18 Ps 114:6,7 Hab 3:10)
- Hebrew 12 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 12:25-29 Great Privileges, Great God, Great Responsibilities](#)- Steven Cole
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**His voice** - God's voice.

**Wuest** says **His voice** "refers to God whose voice at Sinai at that time shook the earth, but who since Calvary, is speaking, not through angels but through His Son. But a future time will come when God will not only shake the earth but the heavens. The writer quotes the prophecy of Haggai (Hag 2:6). This will be fulfilled during the Great Tribulation period at which time the movements and functions of the heavenly bodies will be disorganized (Rev 6:12-17-[note](#), Rev 8:12-[note](#)), and an earthquake will shake the entire earth, occurring at the moment the Messiah's feet touch the Mount of Olives at the close of the Great Tribulation (Zech. 14:4, 5; Rev. 6:12-[note](#), Rev 11:13-[note](#), Rev 16:18-[note](#), Rev 18:18-[note](#)).

**Moses** records "Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. (Exodus 19:18)

**Habakkuk** says "The mountains saw Thee and quaked; The downpour of waters swept by. The deep uttered forth its voice, It lifted high its hands." (Hab 3:10-note)

The initial historical event where God's voice shook the earth was at Mt Sinai when He spelled out the Ten Commandments with a thunderous voice. Imagine how terrifying it was to have the ground under one's feet tremble in response to God's word. Perhaps that would be a good thing for many of us to have happen when we read His Word today! It would certainly get our focused attention! To be sure, there were no sleepers in the "First Church of Mt Sinai"!

**BUT NOW HE HAS PROMISED SAYING, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN: nun de epeggeltai (3SRMI) legon: eti apax ego seiso (1SFAI) ou monon ten gen alla kai ton ouranon:**

- Yet once more: He 12:27 Isa 2:19 13:13 Joe 3:16 Hag 2:6,7,22
- Hebrew 12 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 12:25-29 Great Privileges, Great God, Great Responsibilities](#)- Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 12:18-29 Mount Sinai or Mount Zion?](#) - John MacArthur

## **A SURE PROMISE: YET ONCE MORE!**

**But now** - Another one of those divine "reversals!" (compare other uses of this phrase in Hebrews - Heb 2:8, Heb 8:6, Heb 9:26)

**Spurgeon** - This world is as certainly a mere revolving ball as to human life as it is astronomically; and hopes founded on it will as surely come to nothing as will card houses in a storm. Here we have no abiding city, and it is in vain to attempt to build one. This world is not the rock beneath our feet that it seems to be. It is no better than those green, but treacherous, soft, and bottomless bogs, which swallow up unwary travelers. We talk of terra firma as if there could be such a thing as solid earth; never was an adjective more thoroughly misused, for the world and its fashion passes away.

**He has promised** (1861) (**epaggello** from **epí** = intensifies meaning + **aggéllō** = tell, declare) means to He has announced with certainty as to what He will do. In Classic Greek the verb was used of announcing a summons or issuing a command. The **perfect tense** indicates God's promise stands!

**Shake** (4579) (**seio**, English seismic) means to rock or vibrate sideways or to and fro, to agitate (in any direction) to cause to tremble, to shake, to move back and forth especially in a violent manner. In classical Greek **seiō** is used in a literal as well as figurative sense. Homer, Sophocles, and others used the word to denote the literal shaking of a spear, a door, the reins, a mane, a head, or the earth itself in the form of an earthquake or a similar cosmic disturbance. Figuratively **seiō** denoted the emotional disturbance of the heart through fear and the upsetting of governmental affairs.

**Gilbrant** notes that "the usage of **seiō** in the **Septuagint** is plentiful, for it is found in the historical, poetical, and prophetic books. It is commonly used to denote the trembling or shaking of the earth at the judgments or the wrath of God (cf. Judges 5:4; 2 Samuel 22:8; Job 9:6; Isa 13:13; Ezekiel 38:20; Joel 2:10; Haggai 2:6). It seems to be a theme of the Old Testament to show a connection between the appearance of God on the scene and the shaking of the heavens and the earth (cf. Ex 19:18; 1 Ki 19:11; Ps 68:8) (The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

**Seio** - 5x in 5v - here are the uses translated shake(1), shaken(1), shook(2), stirred(1).

Matthew 21:10 When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"

Matthew 27:51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

Matthew 28:4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.

Hebrews 12:26 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."

Revelation 6:13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

**Seio** - 36x in 36v in the Septuagint -

Jdg. 5:4; 2 Sam. 22:8; Job 9:6; Job 9:28; Ps. 68:8; Prov. 30:21; Isa. 10:13; Isa. 13:13; Isa. 14:16; Isa. 17:4; Isa. 19:1; Isa. 24:18; Isa. 24:20; Isa. 28:7; Isa. 33:20; Jer. 8:16; Jer. 49:21; Jer. 50:46; Jer. 51:29; Ezek. 26:10; Ezek. 26:15; Ezek. 31:16; Ezek. 38:20; Dan. 2:40; Joel 2:10; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:14; Amos 9:1; Nah. 1:5; Hab. 2:16; Hab. 3:14; Hag. 2:6; Hag. 2:21;

OT prophets allude to this **divine (judicial) shaking**...

For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to **shake** (Lxx = seio) the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. (Hag 2:6)

**Comment:** The scope of these words points to a yet future fulfillment at the time of the second coming of



Christ. Note that At Mt. Sinai God's voice caused an earthquake, but when He speaks in the future His voice will also produce a "heaven-quake"! )

And the LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth **tremble** (Lxx = seis). But the LORD is a refuge for His people And a stronghold to the sons of Israel (Joel 3:16-note)

**Comment:** The Lord is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" [Rev 5:5-note], and His powerful **coming** will be to the nations like the triumphant roar of a mighty lion, shaking the very heavens.)

The first shaking of the earth which is mentioned was at Mt Sinai in connection with the giving of the Law as noted above (Ex 19:18) For all who fail to be driven by the Law (like a tutor) to the liberating truth of the Gospel, there awaits another horrible shaking described in the book of the Revelation when God's unimpeded wrath will finally be unleashed on the godless world and only brought to an end by the return of the crushing **Stone** in Daniel (Daniel 2:34-35-note), **the Second Coming of Christ**.

Compare the prophecy in this verse to the writer's earlier declaration...

And, "THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; 11 THEY WILL PERISH, BUT THOU REMAINEST; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD AS A GARMENT, 12 AND AS A MANTLE THOU WILT ROLL THEM UP; AS A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT THOU ART THE SAME, AND THY YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END." (Heb 1:10-12-note)

[How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,](#)

is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!

What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

#### **Flee for refuge to the Rock of Refuge Christ Jesus!**

To those who are obedient this is good news. And the writer means it to be a powerful encouragement to the beleaguered little church to which he writes, in which some feel as though their lives are being shaken to pieces. It is as if the writer is saying "Stand firm amidst the tremors, because the ultimate shaking is coming when the entire present evil order will fall into oblivion by the power of God. And you, as part of the new covenant people, will survive. So hangeth thou in there! Take heart!" On the other hand, to those who are ignoring God's word and drifting further away, this was (or should have been) a disquieting revelation and a challenge to obey what they had heard.

The Lord reveals Himself to you  
In many different ways;  
So don't reject and turn away;  
Instead, give Him your praise.  
--Sper

Sooner or later you'll have to face God.

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**Earthquake Power** - Have you ever been through an earthquake? Several years ago a mild quake awoke me with the swaying and trembling of the house. It was not severe and did not greatly disturb me. I am told that a really severe earthquake is a fearful experience. Much of the fear, however, may depend on the view one takes of the phenomenon.

During an earthquake that occurred many years ago, the inhabitants of a village were extremely alarmed. Yet they were also surprised at the calmness exhibited by an old woman whom they all knew. Eventually one of them asked the woman, "Aren't you afraid?" "No," she answered. "I rejoice to know that I have a God who can shake the world!" She had no fear because of her confidence in her God, who could rattle the world in His hand.

There is a future "shaking," a final universal earthquake coming. In Hebrews 12:26 we read, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven". So great will this cataclysm be that Isaiah tells us "the earth will move out of her place" (Isa. 13:13). In that day we'll be safe with our Lord, and we'll be glad that He who shakes the universe is our God and our Savior. —M. R. De Haan

Great God of wonders! All Thy ways  
Are matchless, Godlike, and divine;  
But the fair glories of Thy grace  
More Godlike and unrivaled shine. --Davies

Nothing can shake those who are secure in God's hands.