

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 42

October 28, 2018



Creation from the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo Cir. 1505–1512

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Forty-Two

THE WRATH OF GOD

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THE FINAL WARNING

Hebrews 12:26–29

²⁶whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. (ASV, 1901).

GOD'S WRATH IN THE PAST AND FUTURE

Hebrews 12:26

²⁶whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven (ASV, 1901).

God has shaken the earth on numerous occasions in response to the sins of mankind and His desire to clear the way for the nation Israel to pass into the promise land. One instance is when He gave the Law on Mount Saini. He wanted the Jews to fear Him so they would not sin against Him for all sin is against God.

Exodus 19:18

¹⁸And mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly (ASV, 1901).

In the book of Judges there is a reference to the Lord's going before Israel after they had encompassed the land of Edom (southeast modern Jordan) and marched towards the land of Canaan near the end of the wilderness wandering. From there they fought with Sihon and Og ancient kings of the Amorites (Numbers 21:21–35) and conquered them. The Israelites asked to pass through their land peacefully and these kings refused the request and countered with an armed conflict.

Judges 5:4–5

*⁴Jehovah, when thou wentest forth out of Seir, When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped, Yea, the clouds dropped water.
⁵The mountains quaked at the presence of Jehovah, Even yon Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel (ASV, 1901).*

This struck terror into all the nations around them, and the prophecies of Moses in his song began to be fulfilled, (Exodus 15:14–15). The resulting dread and terror are expressed: *the earth trembled*. Here God spoke to Moses assuring him that it is God Himself who is causing their victory.

Numbers 21:34–35

³⁴And Jehovah said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon. ³⁵So they smote him, and his sons and all his people, until there was none left him remaining: and they possessed his land (ASV, 1901).

This land had been stolen by Sihon from the Moabites. Israel's major conquest followed after expelling the Amorites. And the land just north of the Jabbok River was under the control of Og, another Amorite king. When Og heard of Israel's march north he met them about 40 miles east-southeast of the Sea of Kinneret (NT Lake of Galilee). The LORD intervened for His people again, and Og and his troops were defeated and annihilated (Deuteronomy 3:1–11). Then Israel controlled and occupied all the Transjordan between Mount Hermon (Deuteronomy 3:8) and the Arnon River and east as far as the land of the Ammonites. This done, they moved unimpeded to the plains of Moab in preparation for the final assault into Canaan.



Map from: <https://larshaukeland.com/bits-pieces/archeology/numbers/the-kingdoms-of-sihon-and-og-numbers-32/>

Another mention of God shaking the earth is found in the Psalms

Psalm 68:7–8

⁷O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, When thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah ⁸The earth trembled, The heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God: Yon Sinai trembled at the presence of God, the God of Israel (ASV, 1901).

In the pillar of cloud, and in the pillar of fire, *when thou didst march through the wilderness*. At the head of the Israelites, leading, guiding, and directing them; providing for them all things necessary, and protecting them against their enemies. *The earth shook*, not only about Sinai, but in other places such as the neighboring countries, who likely, felt the shock. David the psalmist describes terrible thunders accompanied with strong thunder-showers, in which the heavens seemed to drop.

The apostle now finishes this verse in Hebrews 12:26 by quoting Haggai.

Haggai 2:6–9

6For thus saith Jehovah 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; 7and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts. 8The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts. 9The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts (ASV, 1901).

This final shaking is a reference to the shaking that will occur before the Second Coming. This final shaking consists of all the judgments of the Great Tribulation that precede the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom. In Jewish apocalyptic literature, this verse was interpreted as speaking of the final eschatological earthquake involving the entire cosmos. In the past, God shook only the earth but, in the future, God plans to shake both the heavens and the earth. This will occur in conjunction with the Second Coming. After which he will establish His Messianic Kingdom as He says, *“9The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former.”*

Beside the book of Revelation’s discussion of the tremendous judgments on the earth, God foretold these things through both Lord Jesus and the prophet Isaiah.

The Jews knew that there would be this enormous cataclysm before the coming of the Messiah. The Rabbis clearly taught that a worldwide conflict would signal the coming of the Messiah. In the Olivet Discourse, Christ talked about this and he clarified it saying, that’s what the Jews say, but I say to you when nation rises against nation which is a Hebrew idiomatic phrase for the whole world at war. This would have been WW I and that’s the beginning of the end. That’s not the end of the end. He said that when the world war occurs, while it does not signal the coming of the Messiah, it would signal that the end of the age has begun. These birth pangs that Yeshua talked about are the same as the footsteps the rabbis talked about. The “footsteps of the Messiah” had to do with a series of events that will lead up to the coming of the Messiah. The coming worldwide conflict is The Day of Jehovah or the Tribulation. In Isaiah we have more prophecies of the earthly events prior to the Lord’s return.

THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE OF ISAIAH

The first passage to consider starts in Isaiah chapter 24 which is also known as the Little Apocalypse of Isaiah. As one read through this the parallel depictions are apparent of the earth in

utter desolation due to the divine judgments of the Tribulation. Several selections from the entire passage are helpful to demonstrate God's wrath as foretold in approximately 700 B.C.

UTTER DESOLATIONS THROUGH THE DIVINE JUDGMENTS

Isaiah 24:1-13

Behold, Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. ²And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. ³The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste; for Jehovah hath spoken this word. ⁴The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the lofty people of the earth do languish. ⁵The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. ⁷The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. ⁸The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. ⁹They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. ¹⁰The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. ¹¹There is a crying in the streets because of the wine; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. ¹²In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. ¹³For thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done (ASV, 1901)

God provides a word picture of the last segment of the verse where a shaking of the olive tree to bring the olives down is mentioned. After the reapers picked up the crop, they would leave some for the gleaners. The gleaners were welfare recipients in the Mosaic economy. That was the theocratic welfare system. They had to work for their food but it was there for them. It was left for the destitute in the ancient Israelite agricultural economy. The reapers left some of the crops for the gleaners who didn't have enough money to purchase their own food. They had to go out and work for it, but they got it, and it was provided for them.

Today there are machines in the orchards here that grab the trunk of a fruit tree and they shake the whole tree, to bring the fruit down. That is the picture that God is giving us of what's going to happen to the Earth.

WORLDWIDE JUDGMENT

Isaiah 24:19-20

¹⁹*The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is shaken violently.*
²⁰*The earth shall stagger like a drunken man, and shall sway to and fro like a*

hammock; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again (ASV, 1901).

The entire earth is shown as staggering from the judgments of the Tribulation, which God has brought upon the entire planet. The Heavens or the *rakeeah* will also be affected as God says, “*will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven.*”

This Hebrew word *rakeeah* means to spread out or stretch. Some other places in Scripture where this same expression is used are:

1. Job 9:8 He alone stretches out the heavens.
2. Psalm 104:2 The heavens are stretched out like a tent curtain.
3. Isaiah 40: 22 God stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.
4. Jeremiah 10: 12 The Lord has stretched out the heavens.
5. Zechariah 12:1 God stretched out the heavens.

These usages of the Hebrew word for stretch (*rakeeah*) are not quaint poetic hyperbole or exaggerations. They mean to express the properties of the heavens that we cannot see or fully understand. Space is not an empty vacuum. We have difficulty defining space and understanding the concept of the property of space. Scripture gives us some insight as to some of its properties.

1. Space can be torn (Isaiah 64: 1);
2. It can be worn out like a garment (Psalm 102: 25),
3. It can be shaken (Hebrews 12:26; Haggai 2:6; Isaiah 13:13).
4. It can be burnt up (II Peter 3:12).
5. It can be split apart like a scroll (Revelation 6:14);
6. It can be rolled up like a mantle (Hebrews 1:12) or scroll (Isaiah 34: 4).

This too was foretold by God through the prophet Isaiah. God writes future prophecies in the past tense because they have already occurred in His mind.

Isaiah 34:1–8

¹Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye peoples: let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all things that come forth from it. ²For Jehovah hath indignation against all the nations, and wrath against all their host: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. ³Their slain also shall be cast out, and the stench of their dead bodies shall come up; and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. ⁴And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fadeth from off the vine, and as a fading leaf from the fig-tree. ⁵For my sword hath drunk its fill in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Edom, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. ⁶The sword of Jehovah is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for Jehovah hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ⁷And the wild-oxen shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls: and their

land shall be drunken with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. ⁸For Jehovah hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion (ASV, 1901).

Isaiah starts this passage with a call to all the nations. He says that God is very indignant toward the nations and specifically their armies. He is destined them to a slaughter by the sword. He says that the earth and the heavens will shake. When the sword of God strikes all the armies of the nations it will be in the land of Edom. The text goes on to say that the specific location within Edom is the city of Bozrah. Presently, this is located in Southern Jordan. The second and more graphic passage from Isaiah, places him on elevated terrain in Israel looking eastward toward Edom. He then suddenly sees a magnificent bloodstained character approaching him. The character is glorious and splendid in His appearance. Isaiah asks this splendid character a question, the first of several.

Isaiah 63:1–6

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. ²Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? ³I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. ⁴For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. ⁵And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore, mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. ⁶And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth (ASV, 1901).

Interestingly the figure what is approaching him is coming from the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah. His features are reflecting His glory and His strength is apparent. This character is clothed with gloriousness and strength. This is the same view the apostle John had of the Lord Jesus in His resurrected glory, written in the first chapter of the Revelation. This is man is arrayed with the Shekinah glory. He is Messiah. There is only one person in all of creation and Heaven who can “speak in righteousness” and has the power to save. It is our Lord Jesus. He is marching toward Israel from the city of Bozrah. Isaiah sees that the garments of this person are stained with blood. Isaiah then asks how is it that He received these stains. The Lord’s bloodstained garments were caused by the battle fought in the land of Edom within the city of Bozrah. He fought against the nations alone. During the course of the battle the blood of the combatants were sprinkled on His clothes staining them red. He had to conduct the fight to redeem the nation Israel. He fought all alone as there were none to help Him. Clearly the battle is initiated at Bozrah and by the time Christ reaches Israel He has stained His garments with the blood of the enemy.

CHRIST’S SECOND COMING

The Lord Jesus said in the Olivet Discourse exactly how He would return with the earth and the Heaven shaking.

Matthew 24:29–30

²⁹But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (ASV, 1901).

The apostle John was blessed to see the future return of the Lord Jesus.

Revelation 19:11–16

¹¹And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. ¹²And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. ¹³And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. ¹⁵And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (ASV, 1901).

This account of the Second Coming begins by describing Christ as the Judge. It then shows similarities to what is seen in the Isaiah passages and the first chapter of the book of Revelation as the Risen Glorified Lord began to reveal Himself to the apostle John on the isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. The war He engages in is the result of His judgment as one who is faithful and true. He wears a diadem on His head indicating royalty that is natural, not given. His garments are stained with blood, just as Isaiah 63:1-6 described. This is indeed the Second Coming of Christ the Judge and the Incarnate Word of God returning to judge the nations in His righteousness.

When He returns armies will follow him. The plural here indicates that at least two will return with Him. One army is known as the hosts of the Lord or the angelic army. Matthew describes the Lord stating this.

Matthew 16:27

²⁷For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works (KJV).

Another army that will return with Jesus is the army of the Church saints who were raptured prior to the Tribulation. Jude the Lord's brother relates this event.

Jude 1:14–15

¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard [speeches] which ungodly sinners have spoken against him (KJV).

It is interesting that Genesis chapter 5 describes the seventh descendent in chronological descent from Adam as Enoch. More interesting is the fact that God raptured him prior to his natural death when he was only 365 years old. Jude tells us that Enoch had a prophecy from the Lord regarding Christ's Second Coming. It is from the Lord because all prophecy is from Him. Isaiah made it quite clear that the armies that return with our Messiah will not partake in the fight. Messiah will fight this battle alone. John describes His role as first judge then His office as that of King. After judging the nations is will rule as king with a rod of iron. These nations will gather and attempt to destroy the Jews in order to abolish God's rule over them. (Psalm 2:1-6) The exact reverse will happen as He exacts His wrath on them and rules over them. Therefore, all mankind then realizes Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Next message: CHRIST IS THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW
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