

## Things Which Cannot Be Shaken

Empires and Law

Martin G. Collins

Given 08-Nov-08; Sermon #909

Was your life shaken by the Presidential election this week? Was your world moved out of place? Well I hope not.

We live in a time of unusual difficulty and crisis. Anybody who has the ability to think and read must agree that we live in the days of exceptional problems. In fact, we can go further, and say that we live in a day and in an age when we see things collapsing all around us. Things that people have always assumed are durable and lasting.

There is no question, but that we are passing through one of the great climactic turning points in history. It is what we might term a 'paradigm shift' in world events, especially for this nation. The history of the world shows this, and there have been similar epochs and eras before. The whole world, and its future, seemed to be in a kind of transition, and no one knew exactly what was going to emerge out of it.

It is clear that we are living at such a time, during these present last days. These are momentous days. They are tremendous days. There is never a dull moment, although we wish sometimes that there were. They are days of great crisis. But you know, they are also days of great testing for each and every one of us.

As we look at the direction the world has taken, do we have any real hope with regard to the future?

Do we see any prospect at which we can look with peace and enjoyment, and with a burning anticipation? Have we any hope?"

These are the questions, it seems, that the present crisis through which the world is passing, are posing to every thinking person. Those are the very questions that the Bible has always been putting to mankind. The Bible, after all, is the most practical book in the world—it is the book of life. It is not a philosophy, it is not some fairytale, it is not a collection of fantasies, but it is the most practical book in the world, about life and about living.

And so you see, it has one great message from beginning to end, and it is this: Man is always in trouble, because ultimately he is a fool. And he is a fool in this respect: From the very beginning he has believed that he could make a perfect world for himself. This

is what has been promised for the last year through the Presidential election.

That was the original temptation. The tempter came to Adam and Eve and said, "Has God said such and such? Do not listen to Him. He wants to keep you down under His thumb. He knows that if you eat of that fruit, your eyes will be enlightened, and you will know as much as He does. You will be as gods, and you will be able to run your world and everything to perfection." And, man has believed this ever since.

And they listened to him! So this has been the whole trouble with the human race from the beginning. Mankind has held this fatal view that he does not need God. He thinks, without God, that he can build and establish a solid, assured, and certain construction of life. This is why people today look for a government that says, we will take care of you, we will pay your mortgage.

The Bible goes on to deal with this essential fallacy from the beginning to the end. And, it puts it in a very convenient form to us. The first thing anybody coming into this life has to realize, we are told in Scripture, is that he is confronted by a choice. We certainly see that this nation was confronted by a choice, kind of, in the election. The choice in that neither candidate was going to take us in the direction that we should go in. We did have a choice, God's way, or man's way.

It is always one of two things—either the narrow way, or the broad way! The narrow way leads to life, but the broad way leads to destruction. It is either heavenly treasures, or worldly treasures. These are the alternatives!

God put this choice to the children of Israel before they went into the promised land of Canaan two ways—Mount Ebal or Mount Gerizim—two ways, blessing or cursing.

The Bible tells us that, in this world, we make our choice between things that can be shaken, and things that cannot be shaken. Or if you like, we can become citizens of a kingdom that can never be moved. Or, we can belong to the kingdoms of this world that can be moved!

**Hebrews 12:25-29** See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore,

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.

We are commanded not to turn away from Jesus Christ, who speaks, but we are to listen to Him. Paul is telling us to pay attention to what Christ is saying. Our God shakes and moves everything that is not supporting Him, or in agreement with Him.

We are living at a time when we are seeing institutions collapsing all around us—things on which we had banked on, literally and philosophically, failing society! And, the whole of society itself is collapsing around us.

So the most urgent problem for everyone, everywhere, is not whether the President is a Republican or Democrat, a Libertarian or a Socialist, a Fascist or a Communist, or an atheist or a Muslim, but whether we personally belong to the eternal kingdom that cannot be shaken and cannot be moved, rather than the physical kingdoms of the world that can be shaken and can be removed!

Now the Apostle Paul, in putting it in this way, was actually dealing with a particular problem confronting the Hebrew Christians. They had seen the truth, and had left their old religion, and had become Christians. For a while they were enjoying their Christian life, and most things were going well.

But sadly, troubles had arisen, and they had been badly persecuted because they became Christians. Their families and friends ostracized them, and hated them. Some were beginning to listen to false teaching, and some were beginning to look back.

It seems that some were looking back with longing eyes at the temple, and its ritual and ceremony, and its human priesthood. And Paul writes to express his disappointment in them, and to help them out of their discouragement.

He says, "Can't you see that those things are only temporary—those are the things that can be shaken and can be moved." And they have been! Because that which cannot be shaken, and that which cannot be moved, has come in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in His kingdom!

In the book of Hebrews, Paul contrasts the two covenants, one on earth, and one that issues from heaven itself. Since those who refused the Old Covenant did not escape, how could those of the New Covenant who turn away expect to escape either?

The Originator of the New Covenant, who now sits "at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven," is the divine voice that once shook only the earth, but will ultimately shake not only the earth, but also the heavens.

About 580 years earlier, Haggai had to deal with a similar problem of discouragement, for a similar reason to what Paul did. When the foundation of the temple had been laid sixteen years before, Haggai wrote that some of the older men had looked back in sorrow as they remembered the glory and beauty of Solomon's temple.

It is likely that Haggai was a member of the older generation and had seen the temple before it was destroyed, but he did not weep with the rest of his peers. He rejoiced that the new work had begun, and he wanted to see it completed. He had an optimistic and positive view of the future. Haggai had several prophetic sermons, of which chapter two is only one.

**Haggai 2:1-3** In the seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing?'"

Rather than ignore the problem of discouragement that was developing when the people contrasted the two temples, Haggai faced the problem head-on. He picked an important day on which to deliver his message. The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was when he stated these things.

But the important thing about the date was this: It was during the Feast of Tabernacles that King Solomon had dedicated the original temple (I Kings 8:2), and Haggai wanted the people to think about the significance of that.

The restored building had nothing of the splendor of Solomon's temple, but it was still God's house, built according to His plan, and for His glory. The same ministry would be performed at its altars, and the same worship presented to the Lord. Times change, but the Lord's ministry goes on. This was a shakable physical temple, but later an unshakable more glorious spiritual temple would replace it.

Haggai did not deny that the new temple was "as nothing" in comparison to what Solomon had built, but that was not important. The important thing was that this was

God's work, and they could depend on Him to help them finish it. It does not matter how small the work may look in God's church. It is God's work and He will help us to finish it.

To encourage them, Haggai used the command to "Be strong!" three times. Once each to the governor, the high priest, and the people working on the temple, and those two words were very significant to them.

**Haggai 2:4** Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the LOORD; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the LOORD, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the LOORD of hosts.

God inspired Haggai to encourage both the leaders, and the people, to move ahead in God's strength. They were being heartened to move from their past reflection, to present action, by means of a series of urgings that Zechariah and Haggai both gave them. God's presence, emphasized in His words 'I am with you,' forms the basis for their ongoing work in the face of pessimism. It gave them hope, and it changed their discouragement to encouragement.

As you know, during the Feast of Tabernacles, the Jews had the Book of Deuteronomy read to them, so they knew of the record of the three times Moses told Joshua and the people to 'be strong' (Deuteronomy 31:6-7, 23).

No doubt they also remembered that three times the Lord told Joshua to 'be strong' (Joshua 1:6-7, 9); and when King David charged Solomon with the task of building the original temple, three times he told his son to 'be strong' (I Chronicles 22:13; 28:10, 20). "Be strong" was not an empty phrase, but it was an important part of their Jewish history.

It is one thing to tell people to 'be strong' and work, and quite something else to give them a solid foundation for those words of encouragement. Haggai told them why they should 'be strong' and work, and it was because it meant the Lord was with them. "Be strong" is synonymous with the "Lord is with you".

The promise of God's presence was an encouragement to both Joshua and Solomon. We can claim that same promise as we serve God, "For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

His unchanging Word guarantees the promise of God's presence with His people. When

Moses dedicated the tabernacle, God's presence moved in, because the Lord had promised to dwell with His people.

**Exodus 29:45-46** I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.

God has given us, in His church, the same promise. The Holy Spirit, which enabled Moses and the elders to lead the people, enabled the Jews to finish building the temple, and it empowers the church today.

**Haggai 2:5** 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!'

God said this to physical Israel, but it is even more applicable to spiritual Israel—the church today. The Prophet Zechariah, who ministered with Haggai, also emphasized, in Zechariah 4:6, the importance of the Holy Spirit for the enablement needed to do God's will: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."

With prophetic insight, Haggai looked ahead to the time when the Son of God would minister in this temple, and bring the glory of God into it. Certainly, the glory that Jesus brought into that temple was greater than the glory of the tabernacle, or the temple that Solomon built.

**Haggai 2:6-7** "For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 'and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.

God promises to shake all nations, as well as "the heavens and the earth." The result of this shaking, will be that the treasures of all the nations will be yielded by the nations to adorn the temple. The result will also be more than this, because the Lord will fill His house with glory, He will fill it with His own presence.

Haggai looked into the future and saw the end of the ages, when God would shake the nations, and Jesus would return. Verse 7 is quoted by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews

12:26-27, and applied to the return of Christ at the end of the age.

In light of Paul's reference to this chapter, we find that this foreshadows events unfolding in the incarnation of Christ, and ultimately in His second coming at the end of the age. Jesus speaks of His body as "this temple," in John 2:20-21.

God had shaken Sinai when He gave the law, and He will shake the nations, the kingdoms of the earth, before He sends His Son. But today, God's people belong to a kingdom 'which cannot be shaken;' and we will share the glory of Christ, when He establishes that kingdom on earth.

The phrase "the Desire of all nations," in verse 7, has been generally interpreted as a messianic title of Christ. The nations of the world inwardly desire what Christ alone can give, whether they recognize this spiritual yearning, or not. They inwardly desire the abundance and the wealth that only God can give, which comes with happiness.

**Haggai 2:8-9** The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LOORD of hosts. 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LOORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LOORD of hosts."

Isaiah 60:1-5 and Zechariah 14:14, teach that the nations will bring their wealth to the King, when Israel is established in the promised kingdom.

God not only promised the coming of the Messiah, and the glory of God, but He also promised peace. "In this place," in verse 9 refers to the city of Jerusalem where the Messiah will reign as "Prince of peace," as Isaiah puts it.

Those who believe in, and obey Jesus Christ today have peace with God, because of Christ's atoning death and victorious resurrection. We enjoy the "peace of God" as we yield to God and Christ, and trust completely in them. Continued peace is a strong relationship with our God and Father, and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In verse 8, the Lord assured them, that in spite of the bad economy, and their lack of wealth, He was able to provide all that they needed. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine." The remnant had promises of provision from the occupying government, but government grants are limited and unreliable, as this nation is going to find out.

God's wealth is real, but the wealth that man supplies is supposed and contrived.

Paul assured the church, in Philippians 4:19, "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

The humble temple that the Jewish remnant was constructing in Haggai's day would not last. And later, the Romans would destroy Herod's ornate temple. But there would one day be a glorious temple that nobody could destroy or defile. So, the discouraged remnant of Haggai's time (and us today) could take courage and finish their work that God has commissioned them.

Let us take a moment to look at the things that can be shaken—the things that can be removed. Unless we are clear about these, we will go on holding onto the things that are going to be shaken; we will belong to the kingdoms of this world that are passing away, and are coming to nothing.

So let us have a look at, and be clear about the things 'which can be shaken' that mankind, by nature, has always believed cannot be shaken.

What are they? Well, they take many forms. The first one I would call attention to, is "empires." Man has always been a great empire builder. You read about this in the scriptures, and you can read about it in secular literature, and in secular history. In church tradition, we believe that Nimrod was one of the first major empire builders.

Man has always had this idea that if he could only conquer the world and set up a great government—a kingdom—and organize it and control it by military and various other means, he would have a kind of utopia—a kind of perfect society.

And so the history of the past has been very largely the history of great empire building. These are man's attempts to bring blessings to mankind, but they are driven by wicked men who have selfish motives. The history books are full of the accounts. But we also know, that Satan has been behind them all.

As you know, there was a great empire called Babylon, and there was a great king at the head of it called Nebuchadnezzar. He conquered everybody and he was in many ways—a great man! But he began to think that he was a god—and he thought to make the people worship him!

**Daniel 5:20-21** "But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed



Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

He looked at his great empire, and he believed that it was unshakable, and that nothing could ever touch it. But quite soon, this man found himself like an ox in a field, and his nails grew into talons, his hair became long and unruly, and his whole body was covered by hair. The dew of heaven descended upon him, and he ate grass like an ox. He was ridiculed, humbled, and brought to nothing!

Then there was another great kingdom that arose, called the Medo-Persian empire. This was a tremendous empire. It defeated three nations: Lydia in 547 BC, Babylon in 539 BC, and Egypt in 538 BC. But it disintegrated the same as did the Babylonian Empire.

The great Greek Empire, under that mighty man Alexander the Great. What a phenomenon! What a military genius! He conquered the whole of the then known world, before he was 30 years of age. And here he was, controlling the entire civilized world. And, his kingdom seemed to be unshakable as well. What happened to him?

It all came to nothing, and it all passed away, while the world speaks about "the glory that was Greece." And, people to this day visit the Parthenon and the other great ruins. The empire is long gone. Only ruins remain!

Then of course, there was the great Roman Empire—what an empire! In many ways they were the greatest empire builders: Experts in law; military prowess; devolution of government. The Romans were masters at empire building. Look how they went through Europe, even through Britain, and conquered it, and built their arterial roads, and Hadrian's Wall across the width of England to keep out the Picts from the north. They also went through the Middle East, Northern Africa, and over into Asia. They did this primarily on foot. What an empire! Certainly nothing could ever remove it! Or, so people thought.

But it was removed when the Barbarians—the Goths, and the Vandals—descended by their hordes, and conquered the Roman Empire, and sacked the great city of Rome! And the ruins in Rome can still be seen today! It all just disintegrated.

Then, in more recent times, there was the man called Adolph Hitler. By human standards, he was a great empire builder. He repeatedly claimed that he was "building the Third Reich which was going to last a thousand years." But, how long did it last? Not

much more than twelve years, and it ended in a bunker in the City of Berlin, which had been reduced to a heap of ruins!

Up until the early 1900s, the greatest empire that recorded history has ever known, was the British Empire! This was the empire on which the sun never set—a world empire on which the sun does set—an empire that has almost been wiped from history.

It is talked vaguely about in terms of a Commonwealth—but there is no empire! Queen Elizabeth has just signed away the United Kingdom's sovereignty to the illusive European Union. Not only is she no longer an empire, but for all practical purposes the U.K. is no longer a sovereign country.

These were empires that man thought were certain—they seemed durable—they were supposed to be lasting —nothing could ever move them. But, all of them are gone! God has removed them all! They were all shakable and movable.

The United States of America has been another attempt at empire building. Economically, militarily, scientifically and technologically; no nation has ever been greater. But again, she has already been in decline in every conceivable way. She, too, has lost her sovereignty.

Treacherous leaders going back more than a century have sold her out. She has been raped and pummeled from within by corrupt politicians, perverse academic professors, self-serving religious leaders, immoral citizens and spoiled unruly children. She is an empire of death that even murders her own children.

And now, the globalists make a final attempt at a world empire. Actually, it is Satan's final attempt at his own global empire; and it is being revealed, and is forming before our eyes. It, too, will go the way of the others, because God rules in the affairs of men, and He is eternally sovereign. He sets up kings, and strikes them down.

**Daniel 2:20-21** Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.

One of the most important ways in which the Bible speaks of the Lord in both Old Testament, and New Testament is that He rules over kings eternally. We first encounter this in the song of Moses and Miriam, which affirms that, "The Lord will reign forever and

ever." This idea of the Lord's eternal reign as king in the future is repeated numerous times in Scripture, and His permanent reign even extended into time immemorial in the past.

**Psalm 93:1-2** The LOORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; the LOORD is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength. Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved. Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.

The culmination of Jesus Christ's kingship is found in Revelation 19:16 and 17:14. Here, He is the "King of kings and Lord of lords." And, Revelation 15:3 tells us that the Lord God Himself is the "King of the nations" or the "ages." In fact, most of the book of Revelation is devoted to declaring God's victory over the powers of evil.

So God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, (who is like His Father) are everlasting in both directions, infinitely forward into the future, and infinitely back in time. They have no beginning, or end.

**Psalm 102:24-27** I said, "O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days; Your years are throughout all generations. Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end.

The years of God stretch through all the generations of people, and all the changes that have transpired on the earth. He existed at the very beginning, and He continues to exist to the very close of human history, and beyond. He is unchangeably the same.

Another thing that most people bank on is a belief in law and order! Good government. There was a time when there were many monarchies, oligarchies or aristocracies, and so on. But, now we have "the ultimate," the perfection in political science, and the illusion of democracy. The rule of the people! The people governing themselves—government of the people, by the people, for the people!

But some people said, "How can you guarantee that this is going to be alright if every man is going to have a say in government? How are you going to keep law and order?" "Oh!" They said, "You do not have to worry, every man instinctively believes in

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

observing the Rule of Law! The Rule of Law," they said, "is unchallengeable, you can rely on it, and ultimately men in the end will always respect the Rule of Law, and they will obey!"

What is happening? Well, we are reading constantly about people saying, "Oh I know that bill was passed by the government, but I do not like it." And so they ignore it! They ignore certain courts of law, they ignore governmental legislation, and they ignore the Bill of Rights, which states that "All men are created equal." And if a group of men say, "We do not agree, we do not like it!" They say, "We are not going to abide by this!" This nation was designed and formed as a republic, and a republic upholds the standards of law. The problem is that the law has been corrupted, and so has the republic.

Is there any true 'Rule of Law'? Is not one of the major causes of the present crisis that men and women are no longer paying any respect to the law?

**Deuteronomy 12:8** "You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes —

But now, even this touted "perfect" government system of 'democracy' has been shaken, and moved off its axis. The foundational laws of this once great nation are ignored today, because this nation has become a nation of perverse sins, law-breakers, self-serving narcissists. It is embarrassing, to say the least, even shameful, and it can be very depressing.

The majority of the people of this nation demanded the right to sacrifice their children to the god of sex, by way of abortion. The unnatural use of the human body has been legalized—men with men, and women with women—by way of gay rights (or better said, gay wrongs).

The foundational laws of this nation, the U.S. Constitution, and Bill of Rights were designed to work only under the immutable laws of God. But they no longer work, because of the flagrant rejection of God's immutable laws.

In 1778, James Madison, who later became the President of the United States of America, from 1809-1817, is reported to have said:

We have staked the whole future of American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future ... upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to sustain ourselves,

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)  
according to the Ten Commandments of God.

But now God Himself is shaking the greatest empire in the history of man, because of the sins of man himself. These are all types of empires that mankind thought was absolutely immovable and unshakable. And every one of them has been shaken before our eyes. We are living in an age of collapsing institutions. Not only religion and knowledge, but everything is really, and literally, collapsing before our eyes.

Now the question that arises is, "Why can all these things be shaken?" The apostle Paul answers it. Listen to how he puts it, in Hebrews 12:27: Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

'Things that are made'—That is why all these things are collapsing. They are all created by mankind, and they are therefore all finite! Everything that man does is made by a finite being!

Man is finite! Everything he makes is finite! He is too small and weak. He does not have the understanding, and yet he does not hesitate to turn his back on God, and laugh at Him and ridicule Him, and say that he can conquer the universe. He is a created being, and he is too small. Satan has deluded man into believing that he is greater than God.

But according to the Bible, these things that a man makes are not durable, and are being shaken away. Not only because man is created and finite, but more importantly, because he is also sinful! And because he is sinful, everything that he makes is corrupt! His very best is corrupt! The more he aspires towards perfection, the more he shows his corruption.

**Matthew 6:19-21** Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Everything that man touches, everything that man makes is corrupt; it rots and rusts, unless he is guided by God.

At the heart of men, there is this treachery, and it manifests itself in all that he does.

Look at the greed and the selfishness, the jealousy, the envy, and the readiness to stab one another in the back. Who can trust whom? It is the characteristic of the whole of life, and of all worldly institutions.

Everything that man touches is corrupted, and it has been perverted, and because of that, it begins to decay the moment he makes it. And so the whole history of civilization is one of cycles—man making great physical achievements—empires going up and up and up—destroying lives as they go—they reach the pinnacle of power and down they go!

The same with civilizations! Read about the great civilizations of Egypt, China, and various other Empires of the past—the great knowledge that they acquired—and it has all been lost. The great library of Alexandria, and its books and writings, most of which were destroyed. The book burnings of the Dark Ages by the Catholic church—again knowledge lost.

The modern secular scholars and evolutionists said that we have become too sophisticated, too advanced to do such a thing again—it could never happen again. And then came Hitler's book burnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and again knowledge lost.

They are beginning to rediscover bits of it—this is the story of the human race!—Instability and decay, and human civilization shaken! Why? Because man himself, and the evil spirit being that instigates him, has made them. They are themselves corrupt at the core.

But you know the ultimate cause of the collapsing of all the empires made by man whether military, or civilization, or philosophy, or science, or whatever it is. The ultimate cause of why they collapse is that the curse of God is upon them because they sin! God's laws are immutable, and the penalties are immutable. God can forgive sin, but how many times has He forgiven sin, and yet we still have to suffer the consequences of it?

God will not allow man to make undue claims that these powers are his! Patience is a virtue, and God sets the standard for it. Look at it in the Old Testament stories—God allowed these great empires to arise—and at times they seemed to be encompassing the whole world—then God shook them and they vanished!

There is a dramatic story at the end of Acts 12. As you know Herod, the Jewish king hated the Christians. He arrested one of them called James, and put him to death. Then he arrested Peter, and thought of killing him, but Peter escaped. And then we are told

that certain neighbors of this man came to him, wanting some favor from him, and they flattered him doing their bow before him, and they praised him so that he delivered some great speech to them. I find this speech very interesting.

**Acts 12:21-24** So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God grew and multiplied.

God will not allow a man to inflate himself to the heavens for very long. In this world depicted by scientists, philosophers and politicians, is there anything that we can bank on? Is there anything that we can hold onto? Well there is!

What are the things that cannot be shaken? The first thing is what Paul refers to, here in Hebrews 12:

**Hebrews 12:25-27** See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Paul starts off in his epistle to the Hebrews by saying,

**Hebrews 1:1-2** God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

You know that it comes to this, that there is literally only one hope in this world at any moment! What is it? That God has spoken the Word of God! Here is something that cannot be shaken! Paul says, "See that you do not refuse Him who speaks." Why is this unshakable? Christ Himself put it like this:

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

**Matthew 24:35** Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

There is something that cannot be shaken.

The sermon of the Apostle Peter years later, repeated it in these words:

**I Peter 1:23-25** Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the LOORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

What we have in our hands, the printed paper can rot, but the words on it, the words that we read, and the inspiration that we get from it is unshakable, and everlasting. The word of God is everlasting.

**Isaiah 40:8** "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

Of course, the Word of God also refers to Jesus Christ, but it also refers to His words. So here is something vitally important that we must understand. This is something that can never be moved, never be shaken. God has gone on speaking, and look at the centuries along which this Word has been speaking. 2000 years, and even all the way back to the creation of mankind!

The Word of God has, and will, withstand the test of time. From God's creation of Adam and Eve, the Word of God has been mankind's only hope, and it goes on speaking when everything else comes and goes.

**John 1:1-4** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.



Why is this Word so durable? The answer is, because it is the Word of God—Jesus Christ! God is from everlasting, to everlasting—"I Am, Who I Am!"—The Sovereign God! And Jesus Christ, God's Spokesman is Eternal. He said, "I and My Father are one." They are both eternal.

And so He has spoken. And what has He taught us? Well, He has given us His law. And this is another absolute. It is unshakable and immovable!

God having made man, then, told him how to live. And, He told him that if he did not live in that way of life, he would be miserable. And, his life would be what the history of mankind has proved to be. God told Adam and Eve that when He had made them!

And He repeated this law in the Ten Commandments, given through Moses and expounded by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. God has told us perfectly plainly how to live! And these are absolutes today, as they were at the very beginning.

And what God has told us is that there is only one way of blessing, that there is only one way to be happy, and that there is only one way to be secure—obey the laws of God! That is why this nation, this world, can never have an empire that brings peace, because they do not obey the laws of God.

God has said that if you do not obey His laws you will have a life of misery and of wretchedness. He sums it up in a phrase, "The way of the transgressor is hard." That word hard is such an understatement.

**Isaiah 57:20-21** But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Though nations and empires may become wealthy, though they may accumulate knowledge, they will never know peace.

**Romans 3:10-18** As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one. Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known.

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

There is no fear of God before their eyes."

These verses describe the vileness and wickedness of various parts of the human body, indicating figuratively that every part contributes to a person's condemnation. In sequence these quotations pertain to three actions:

Talking—the throat, tongue, lip, and mouth (verses 13-14)

Conduct—the feet (verses 15-17)

Seeing—the eyes (verse 18)

Their speech is corrupt ('open tombs' or graves); they are dishonest ('deceit'); they are damaging (poison); and they are blasphemous (cursing and bitterness). From talking of sin, they commit sin, even to the point of being anxious to murder.

As a result, they and others are destroyed, materially and spiritually. They are miserable, and know no inner peace. All this is summarized in Paul's words, 'There is no fear of God before their eyes'. Fearing God—reverencing Him by worship, trust, obedience, and service—is the essence of a godly person.

We are responsible beings, made in the image and likeness of God, and we will have to give Him an account of the deeds we do. It is coming. It is absolute!

This is not the word of politicians or of philosophers; it is the word of God! But, thankfully, Paul does not leave it at that; otherwise we would all be hopelessly lost!

There is a way of escape. We can leave the kingdoms of men that are collapsing. We can become citizens of a Kingdom, which cannot be moved and shaken! These are absolutes.

But there is another vital absolute, and it is that there is only one way of entering the Kingdom of God.

**Philippians 3:18-21** For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Our citizenship is in heaven, and it is the only citizenship that is going to last. If you belong to the kingdoms of men, you will be destroyed with them! And you will reap the consequence for your choice of where you place your loyalty. There is only one true permanent place of safety, and that is the Kingdom of God. There is of course a temporary physical place of safety for the church during the Great Tribulation. I am not talking about that one.

Here is a Kingdom that 'cannot be shaken'—that 'cannot be moved.'

**Hebrews 12:28** Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

The fear of God is foundational to our being in that Kingdom that cannot be shaken. We are in the process of receiving a kingdom, which means that we believe the Word of God, and that His kingdom cannot be moved.

It is recorded in the Old Testament that three times Moses told Joshua and the people to be strong; three times the Lord told Joshua to be strong; three times King David told his son Solomon to be strong; and three times Haggai used the command to be strong—once each to the governor, the high priest, and the people working on the temple. And, those two words were very significant to them, and to us!

According to the Dictionary of Biblical Imagery:

Three is the minimum number necessary to establish a pattern of occurrences. A single event can be pure chance; a pair can be mere coincidence; but three consecutive occurrences of an event serve as a rhetorical signal indicating special significance.

Three speaks of the totality and sufficiency of the work of Jesus Christ. Here as well, the figure three connotes significance, sufficiency and completeness.

In the New Testament, there is yet another three times that the command to be strong is used, and that was by the Apostle Paul.

**I Corinthians 16:13** "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."

**Ephesians 6:10** "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

The third and last place, in the New Testament, that God's people are told to be strong, is in II Timothy.

**II Timothy 2:1** "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

God is sending us encouragement, and it means that God is with us.

The evil direction of the world today, should be enough of a warning to motivate us to be serious, humble, and prayerful. We should make it our determined goal to be prepared for the solemn scenes, through which we are soon to pass. We should be developing a habitual contemplation of the truth, and an understanding that all that we see is soon to pass away.

It should cause us to ask, with deep earnestness, whether we are prepared for these amazing scenes, should they suddenly burst upon us.

**II Peter 3:5-14** For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned

Things Which Cannot Be Shaken by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

The fact of all these things are dissolving should exert a deep and unshakable influence on us, to persuade us to lead holy lives. We should feel that there is nothing immovable on the earth—this is not our permanent home. Our vital interests are in another world—another Kingdom.

Be Strong! Be Strong! Be Strong! The Word of God is unshakeable!

We have great hope with regard to the future, because we belong to 'a kingdom that cannot be shaken.'