



Haggai 2:6-9

The Desire of the Nations

The Hebrew prophet Haggai wrote about B.C. 520 during the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem (B.C. 520-516) after the Babylonian Exile. His goal was to encourage the builders by giving a word of hope.

Haggai may be a contraction of Haggiah meaning festival of Yahweh. He was evidently born in Babylon during the exile, or was an extremely old man who returned to Jerusalem as a member of the group of nearly 50,000 with Zerubbabel. He recorded his messages during the reign of Darius (c. 520 B.C.).

It is said that the Jewish rabbis were accustomed to lament that five things in the first temple were lacking in the second. These were the sacred fire, the Shekinah, the ark and cherubim, the Urim and Thummim and the spirit of prophecy. As to the outward appearance the second temple was greatly inferior to the first. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had removed the temple treasures and vessels (Ezra 3:12, 13; 2 Kings 24:12-13).

There were some very old people in their midst who had seen the Temple in its former glory and this new one they were building was nothing in comparison (2:3). Word was getting around the camp so Haggai preaches to encourage them to continue on with the task for God's glory. Now take courage, Zerubbabel, declares the Lord, take courage also, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you people of the land take courage, declares the Lord, and work; for I am with you, declares the Lord of hosts (v. 4). You can't miss his emphasis. It is take courage, take courage, take courage and work because the Lord is with you.

There is no reason to fear because the Lord is with them. I am with you . . . My Spirit is abiding in your midst (vv. 4-5). Don't despise the days of small things if God has His hand in it. The Lord is their King and Shepherd and they will therefore lack nothing in the service of the Lord. He will provide the means of fulfilling His temple with splendor.

THE SHAKING OF THE NATIONS

For thus says the Lord of hosts, Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land (v. 6).

Perhaps the LORD is reminding the people of the time when He shook the world when He descended upon Mt. Sinai and gave the covenant to the people of Israel (Exodus 19:16-20; cf. Heb. 12:26). However, the prophet is speaking of a time when the shaking of the world will be more violent and

speaking of a time when the shaking of the world will be more violent and will affect the heavens and the earth. All nations will be affected and even the islands of the sea. We are given the impression that the whole universe will be shaken.

This shaking is a herald of the coming of the Lord to judge the nations of the earth. It reminds us of the vivid prophecy of Isaiah in 24:18-23.

The later prophets employed the imagery of the shaking of the nations as the inauguration of the messianic age (cf. Ezek. 33:19-33; Isa. 13:13; 24:18-23; Joel 3:15-21). Haggai foresees the whole universe in convulsions that effect every nation.

The apostle Peter wrote of such a shaking in 2 Peter 3:10-13. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people 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 destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. ”

Nothing in the universe will remain the same. The Almighty God and His Messiah will break the power of the nations. The ultimate fulfillment of this passage will be at the Second Coming of Christ. Haggai continues in verses 21-22, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. And I will overthrow the thrones of the kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, every one by the sword of another. Yahweh is the sovereign ruler who overthrows the powers of the kingdoms. He is sovereign over the nations. Wars and revolutions are nothing but His shaking of the Gentiles. The LORD God reigns. He uses these cosmic events to accomplish His redemptive purposes.

THE DESIRE OF THE NATIONS

The LORD God says, I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts (v. 7). The margin of the NASB reads, the Desire of all nations will come. Who is this person and when will He come?

There are two prevailing interpretations of this verse. Older scholars following Luther see Christ as the Desire of the nations, and another group that interpret it as not a reference to the person of the Messiah, but to a far wider and richer sense that the mere literal appearance of His person in the literal temple ” (Thomas Moore). Luther was a strong proponent of the interpretation that Luke 2:22-26 was the fulfillment of Haggai. In one sense, Jesus Christ will be the desire of all the nations. Matthew 24:14 Jesus said, This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. ”

On the other hand, Calvin concluded, the more simple meaning is . . . that the nations would come, bringing

On the other hand, Calvin concluded, the more simple meaning is . . . that the nations would come, bringing with them all their riches, that they might offer themselves and all their possessions as a sacrifice to God. ”

God is never short on supply for His people and His eternal purposes. God is not dependent upon men to supply His needs. Everything belongs to Him.

The wealth of all nations, or desire of the nations is a designation for the Messiah. You can translate it desire, or consolation. The Gentile nations will come to the desire of all nations, the Messiah. He is the object of desire meaning that in which a man finds pleasure, joy and value.

Isaiah and Micah told of all nations flowing to the mountain of God to worship Him and hear His Word. He will be the one in whom the nations find their treasure and riches. He is the Pearl of Great Price. ”

The key idea is expressed by Keil and Delitzsch, That shaking will be followed by this result, or produce this effect, that all the valuable possessions of the heathen will come to fill the temple with glory. Isaiah comforted his people saying,

Behold, the Lord God will come with might,
With His arm ruling for Him.
Behold, His reward is with Him
And His recompense before Him.
Like a shepherd He will tend His flock,
In His arm He will gather the lambs
And carry *them* in His bosom;
He will gently lead the nursing *ewes*.

Jesus was a descendent of Zerubbabel, but there is no evidence to think Haggai thought Zerubbabel was the messiah.

The result of all this shaking of the universe will be the filling of the Temple with the glory of the Lord.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine, declares the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts, and in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts (vv. 8-9).

The Temple is going to be filled with the possessions of the Gentile nations as they come to worship their King. Through the shaking they realize that He is sovereign over the universe.

A beginning of this fulfillment can be seen in Jesus coming to the Temple and cleansing it. The glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle and Solomon's temple at their dedication. The fulfillment commenced when Yahweh came to His temple in the person of His Son Jesus Christ the Messiah. The prophet Malachi wrote in 3:1, Behold I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ”

The time of the greatest glory of that Temple was fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus.

As the incarnate *Logos*, in whom the glory of Yahweh filled the temple, Jesus Christ brought glory to the temple in the truest essence. He brought a greater glory to the Temple with His divine presence, not in symbolic form, but true divine glory. The glorification of the house of God commenced with the Incarnate Son of God and will reach its consummation when He returns. Cf. Rev. 21:10, 11, 22-24. Cf. Heb. 12:26-27. It takes in the whole span from the first coming of Christ to His return in glory.

The glory of the second temple was that it was the starting point for the new covenant. This glory reaches over the entire unfolding of the glorious kingdom of Christ.

The Jewish temple finds its ultimate fulfillment in the great high priest, Jesus Christ. A greater fulfillment will be the Lord Almighty and the Lamb in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:22-27).

Therefore, Yahweh can say, "The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former" (Haggai 3:9). The former glory is that of Solomon's temple, the latter that of Zerubbabel of which Herod is only a remodeling and addition. The final glory will be a lasting one.

"If in this place I will give peace." The Prince of Peace is one who brings peace to Jerusalem. When He reigns as sovereign the world will know true peace. Note the parallel passages (Mic. 5:4; Joel 4:17; Isa. 60:18). Jesus came to give us perfect peace. Cf. Isa. 9:7; 66:12; Ps. 72:17; Lk. 2:14.

Haggai makes an astonishing promise: "The glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former one" (v. 9). At the second coming of Christ the unfulfilled passages in Haggai will be accomplished and fully realized. Jesus Christ will be the desire of all the nations of the world. He alone can change the heart of the peoples. His will be a kingdom that will not be shaken (Heb. 12:26-28). The glory and honor of the Gentile nations will be brought into it (Rev. 21:24, 26). The temple as a sanctuary will disappear but the essence of the promise will be fulfilled in the New Jerusalem, where "the dwelling of God is with men" (Rev. 21:3; 22).

It is my prayer that you will let Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, the Messiah become the desire of your heart. If you need help in knowing Him in an intimate personal relationship read [A Free Gift for You](#).

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