

“And I Will Shake” – *Haggai 2:6-9*

Introduction – Advent is the season of waiting and longing. It leads up to the celebration of the Incarnation, the coming of God in the flesh. Traditionally, it is also a season of waiting and longing for the second coming of our God, when Jesus returns for the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, and the consummation of His kingdom in full. Advent is the season of waiting and longing because the world is not right. Advent is the season of *faithful longing* because we have been promised that God did and is making all things right.

Longing in Haggai’s Day – Haggai was a prophet during the post-exilic time, along with Zechariah. The first temple, built by Solomon, had been destroyed and the people carried into exile in Babylon. After seventy years, Cyrus issued a decree (539 BC) for the Jews to return and rebuild the temple. They built the altar and the foundations of the temple, but then life distracted them, and they gave themselves to building their own homes and businesses. It is now some 19 years later and the Word of the LORD comes to Haggai (Hag 1:1ff).

Overview of the Text – Our section is the end of the second oracle of Haggai, answering the concerns of the older Israelites who remembered how glorious Solomon’s temple had been compared to the second temple being built (Hag 2:1-3, Ezra 3:12-13). The LORD tells the leaders and the people not to fear for His Spirit is still with them (vv4-5). The second temple is not really the second temple; wait a little bit and He will shake all of creation again (v6). The nations will all be shaken, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations (or possibly, the Desire of All Nations shall come – AV), filling the temple with glory (v7). Silver and gold make a temple glorious, but all the glory is God’s (v8). The glory of the true second temple will be greater than Solomon’s, and the peace (shalom) will be greater still (v9).

Longing in Jesus’ Day – The second temple period continued for centuries. In 19 BC, Herod began to refurbish and “glorify” this temple. The construction would continue through Jesus’ life until 63 AD, just seven years before the Romans destroyed it. When Jesus came up to Jerusalem and cleansed the temple, He made clear that He was the true New Temple, the final Temple (John 2:19-22). In Christ, we are the Temple with Him, living stones with Christ as the chief cornerstone. It is worth considering how this prophecy in Haggai points both to Christ and His ministry, as well as to His church, us, and our ministry in Him.

Longing in the New Covenant Church – After Christ’s ascension and the outpouring of the Spirit, the saints are persecuted and must flee Jerusalem. In the midst of this dispersion, there is a temptation to long for the old temple, to return to old covenant practices. And this is when the author of Hebrews applies this text from Haggai:

*“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. 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, 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.”* (Hebrews 12:22–29, NKJV)

Advent is the season of longing and Christmas is the celebration of the Desire of All Nations coming to fulfill that longing. Jesus Christ is the answer to all the longings of your heart. Jesus Christ is the answer to the longing of the nations, the Desire of All Nations (Luke 2:25-32). And, as God would have it, that longing is being fulfilled, the kingdom of God is spreading, the nations and all things which have been made by ungodly means and ungodly hands, are being shaken such that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. And this shaking takes place as we come to the New Temple and worship. It shook at Sinai. It shakes much further and deeper at Zion.

Fulfilled Longing in Reverent Worship - How can we then come and worship in a light and breezy and irreverent manner (Heb 12:28-29)? Why do we not see this shaking? What kind of worship are we offering? And Who are we truly turning to in worship?

The Aristocracy of a Nation - In Christ, we (the church) are the desire of all nations. Spurgeon writes, *"If the nation did but know it, the saints in a nation are the aristocracy of that nation. Those who fear God are the very soul, and marrow, and backbone of a nation. For their sakes God has preserved many a nation. For their sakes he gives unnumbered blessings. "Ye are the salt of the earth": the earth were putrid without them. "Ye are the light of the world": the world would be dark without them."*

The Shaking that You Must Receive – In the preaching of the Gospel, the Spirit shakes off unbelief, pride, rebellion, and self-justification. "The desire of all nations shall come" – and so we should preach with devout assurance of success. The earth shall be as full of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. The peck of leaven will spread to the whole lump. The small rock will grow to become the mountain of the Lord. And your salvation will be made complete as well. In your life, He will shake off those things which can be shaken. He will winnow you, separating the wheat from the chaff. He will heat you up and purge away your dross. He is identifying what is permanent: your salvation. The sins of men can be shaken but the salvation of men cannot be. All your troubles are a part of that shaking and all that will be left will be that which cannot be shaken.

The Final Advent – And of course, all this shaking ends with the second coming of our Lord, the end of our final enemy, death, and the resurrection of the body and the consummation of all creation. *"The salvation of the world is an eschatological earthquake, a profound earthquake, in which every tawdry thing is absolutely destroyed, reduced to powder, and every noble thing remains standing, revealed for what it is in everlasting glory"* – Wilson. We long with all of creation for the revealing of the sons of God (believers) for what and who they are (Rom 8:18-19). This Temple will ultimately and finally bring in perfect peace (Hag 2:9) which the angels declared at the birth of Christ (Luke 2:14) and Jesus promised His disciples even in these tumultuous days of shaking (John 14:27, 16:33).

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