

Let's return to our study now. We're in Haggai chapter 2, and we have come here to this very fascinating verse, verse 7. God says, "I will shake all nations, and all nations"—this is my translation, if you want to write this in the margin or not—"I will shake all nations, and all nations shall come in desire." Desire. Those from all nations will come in desire, out of desire, motivated by desire. The word desire here just stands by itself. It's a feminine construct. Feminine gender is used in Hebrew for abstractions, for immaterial things. This is motivation. This is the reason that the nations will come when God shakes them. They don't cower in fear. They don't run away like Israel did at the base of Mount Sinai.

And think about this now. These people of Judah have been back in the land now for over 15 years. They laid a foundation stone back in Ezra chapter 3, and then they became fearful and they quit. A lot of letters, a lot of hand flapping, a lot of histrionics about, well, this one and that one and who shot Joshua or whatever, but nothing was done. God lights a fire under the leadership here, and the leadership tries to get things going again. But recent history ought to tell you that just because you have leadership doesn't mean that people are going to follow. There has to be desire in the heart. Leaders can lead, but they can't get behind everybody and push them and herd them and cattle prod them into faith, love, and obedience.

Leadership can set an example. Look at the Lord Jesus. Do you think He set an example? Do you think He exhorted, encouraged, and provided the distilled, embodied Word of God from heaven, manna from heaven for the people? The Lord Jesus Himself could not bring the people of His generation across the finish line into the kingdom. Leadership alone is not enough. Joshua is a good leader. Zerubbabel is a good leader. But they cannot carry the people on their shoulders, and we've seen examples in the last several decades, you know, across our adult lives where leadership has been in evidence, but followership has been lacking. And it is true in every area of life.

So what does God say here? What is God saying through Haggai the prophet on this 24th day? Remember when Jesus, in the tragic entry, Face Palm Sunday, comes in, looks around at the temple, and walks back out, knowing in His heart this is not going to be the year, this is not going to be the time that He can bring the kingdom and His messianic rule to Israel? They are not ready. They are not following. Those who want to make Him king, which is a good thing, want to do it for all the wrong reasons. They want to do it for logistical reasons and political reasons and social reasons and economic reasons, not for spiritual reasons. And He is only going to come when there is a spiritual desire, and it isn't there.

God looks at the people after 15 years of celebrating these fall feasts, and here they have done it again after He sends the prophet and says, "Consider your ways. I am with you. My Spirit is here. Let's get this done." And the result is well short of the glory of God. So what does He say? You people have not got the desire. You don't have the will. You don't have the spiritual purposefulness.

Now ask yourself this question. If God looks at me, looks at my ways and my attendance, my attention to my ways, my assignment of value to the presence of His Spirit, my assignment of value to His promises and His provision, leadership that has been provided in the person of the Holy Spirit, in the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, the full-orbed witness of Scripture, if He comes and looks at my temple and the sort of frantic, last-minute, half-hearted efforts to build the thing after chastisement, what is He going to say?

Here is what He said in this day, on the 24th day of the month after those fall feasts are complete. God says, "You people have not got the desire." Why isn't there glory in this building? Why didn't the glory come on the Feast of Trumpets? Why didn't the glory come? Remember, they finished their work. They got it done on the 24th day of the sixth month, and here comes the fall feast in the seventh month. Why didn't the glory come when they blew the shofar on the first? Why didn't the glory come when they observed the Day of Atonement on the tenth? Why didn't the glory come when they all assembled their leafy booths? Why didn't the glory come? When will the glory come?

God says it right here. "I gave you a word. I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains among you. Do not fear." But just because the Spirit is present doesn't mean that people are following the leadership of the Spirit. Just because we have the indwelling Holy Spirit doesn't mean that we follow His leadership. God says, "I look at you people. I see no desire. I see no motivation. So I am going to shake the nations. I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I am going to shake everything up, not just Israel, not just My people, not just Jerusalem, not Mount Zion. I am going to shake everything and see what falls out. And there are those who are going to come to this place in desire, out of Chemdath. They see

it as precious. They see it as divine. They see it as the treasure. They see it as the one true pleasant thing: to be in the presence of the Lord, to value God's throne, the train of God's robe."

And when they come, when these desirous people come from all nations, what does God say? "I will fill this temple with glory." Are you asking yourself the question, why there is no glory? No desire. "I will find other people." How many times has God given this message to Israel? He will take the vineyard away from those evil workers who killed His servants and killed His Son and give it to those who will produce the fruit of it. "The kingdom will be taken from you and given to those producing the fruit of it."

Paul tells the Gentiles, God had to snap the dead branches out of the tree of His plan and purpose and graft you wild olive branches in. But the only reason you're there is because you've got faith. They were snapped out for faithlessness. You only reside in the tree through faith—faith and obedience, wanting to be there. You can be snapped out just as easily as they were snapped out. The tree is not salvation. The tree is production. The tree is purpose. The tree is fruitfulness. God's purpose is being accomplished in this world and in the worlds to come, the ages to come.

So when is God going to fill this temple that is not filled and never was filled with His glory? When it is rebuilt and those with desire come to it. Guess who that is? Look around. Look in the mirror. Turn on the face-forward camera on your phone and look at the face you see. We are those shaken out of the nations. God will fill His house with glory, with His presence, with that pleasant desire, the fulfillment of that desire that we can have and should have. And if you're listening to me, obviously you do have. We don't have a lot of entertainment or other things to come. We are here because the Word of God, the communication of the truth of God, is pleasant to us. We desire it. It fills us. It satisfies the hunger in our souls, right? The glory comes when people respond in desire.

Now notice God doesn't say, "I'm going to play harp music. I'm going to send angels who will sing wonderful songs." How is it that people come? It is the shaking of the nations. It is the shaking of the sea. What is that? What does that represent? We circle that word shake. What does it mean? Why does God shake heavens and earth? Why does He shake the sea and the dry land? Why does He shake the nations to bring about this result? What does an earthquake do? Everything that you consider substantial and supportive and immovable and permanent comes into question.

Look around today. Look at society. Look at culture. Look at the economy. Look at the world. Do you see the very foundations in every area of life being shaken to their core? They are, aren't they? So what do we do? Do we quake in fear? Do we cry out for the rocks to fall upon us? That's going to happen to godless people during the tribulation period. What do we do? In desire, we head for the presence of God. That is security. That is safety. That is peace.

Keep reading here. "I will fill the temple with glory," says the Lord of hosts. "Silver and gold are Mine." You don't need to bring Me silver and gold. We are not talking about silver and gold. We are not talking about the substance of this house that you failed to build.

We are talking about the reason you failed to build it, the reason I'm not going to fill it with My glory. It's the lack of desire in your heart.

"The glory of the latter temple shall be greater than the former," says the Lord of hosts. You can't assemble enough gold and silver to create the glory that is going to characterize this latter temple I'm talking about, because I'm not talking about this building or this spot. God is talking about something greater.

It's the feminine construct. It's the concept. It's the abstract. It's the greater and higher invisible reality of His presence that He's talking about. And the glory of the latter temple, where I dwell in My people, not just among them, is going to be greater than anything Solomon could have hoped to achieve, says the higher and greater temple that is desired by these people shaken loose from what the physical point of view thinks is security and safety and a foundation.

People shaken loose from the material world and looking for the higher and greater reality that is the presence of God. "In this place I will give shalom. I will give peace."

What's the last one of the last things Jesus said to His disciples? "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you, not as the world gives." Nothing can secure your financial future. Nothing can secure your physical health

future. Nothing can secure your economic future, your social future, your employment future, your food, clothing, and shelter future. The world cannot guarantee any of those things.

They call it Social Security. Well, good luck with that. "In this place I will give peace." The Lord Jesus comes and says the very same thing His Father says. "I give you peace, not as the world gives." This is a transcendent, eternal, and eternally secure shalom. You want to talk about Yerushalom? Yerushalem? City of peace? God says, "You haven't seen peace until you see the peace that I give."

"I will fill that greater house with My glory that will overshadow and extinguish the memory of Solomon's temple in its grandeur. I will fill it with My glory, and I will give peace." This is our privilege. This is our opportunity.

So now we have Zechariah 1:1–6. As if that message were not clear enough, we saw Zechariah's message: "Return to Me, and I will return to you." There is still hope. Do you want to be a part of this group? Do you want to be a part of that assembly that experiences the glory of God and the peace of God? "Return to Me, and I will return to you." This is why Zechariah comes hard on the heels of that Haggai message that we have just looked at.

People say, "Well, if you're going to shake the nations and they're going to get the desire fulfilled and they're going to see the glory, I guess we're out of luck." God says, "No. Return to Me. I will return to you." This is why in the church age there is neither Jew nor Greek. Whosoever will may come. Let him who is thirsty come. Read the last exhortations in Revelation chapter 22. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Let him who is at thirst, who has the desire, come. "Return to Me, and I will return to you," Zechariah 1:3.

Do not be like your fathers. Don't be like all of these that have preceded you, that fell in the wilderness, that got distracted, got deflected, did what was right in their own eyes, elected Saul to be their king, ended up falling by the wayside in the northern kingdom and, ultimately, in the southern kingdom, went out under the Assyrians, went out under the Babylonians. Do not be like your fathers. Turn from your evil ways.

You can't turn unless you consider your ways. Turn from your evil deeds. "They did not hear or heed Me," says the Lord, Zechariah 1:4. What is it you need to hear and heed? Verse 6: "My words and My statutes which I commanded My servants the prophets." They overtook your fathers. They are now overtaking you. If you haven't learned from history, you are doomed to repeat it.

Back to Haggai, verse 10. On the 24th day of the ninth month, the word of the Lord comes by Haggai the prophet. Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Ask the priests a question." They are supposed to be experts in the law. Ask them this question. Verse 12, Haggai 2: "If someone carries holy meat in the fold of his garment and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil or any food, does that food become holy?" You have sanctified sacrificial meat in the fold of your garment, and you take a little edge of that sacrificial, sanctified meat and you touch some common food. Does it turn the common food holy? Does it become sanctified by contact? What is the answer? We are priests after the order of Melchizedek. What is our answer? No.

On the contrary, it is not mentioned here, but what happens? You touch that which is common with that which is holy. That which is common defiles that which is holy. So the priests answer rightly and say no. You can't take sanctified meat and sanctify that which is common. It doesn't work.

So Haggai said, "If one who is unclean through a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?" Priests answered and said, "It will be unclean." You can certainly take food that was okay to eat a minute ago and touch it with something dead, or if you have come in contact with something dead and then you touch that food, now that food is unclean.

What is the principle here? Before we even go further in the passage, holiness does not transfer by association, but corruption does. Corruption spreads by contact. Holiness does not spread by contact. This is really important when you start thinking about some of the modern-day Christian efforts in terms of getting together and trying to use a group of people in order to spread the word, a group to improve an individual spiritual life. What is the problem with that?

What is God talking about here through Haggai in this idea of contact with holy meat or contact with that which is dead? What is He saying? You're building a sanctified house, right? The temple is holy. That's why you got to wash, and nothing unclean, nothing defiling, can enter into the holy precincts and the rest of it, right?

What is God saying here in this question to the priests? If you consider this temple that you have built to be holy, do you think just by coming in contact with it, that's going to make you holy? Do you think by going to church it makes you a good Christian, in other words? Do you think by carrying a Bible or quoting a verse or saying, "Dear Lord," or praying a prayer, does that confer sanctification to you? No.

What happens? If you are spiritually dead, and I don't mean an unbeliever, I mean there is no life in you. You're a dead branch. You're a fruitless extension of the vine. I mean, when you come in contact with that Bible or with that group or with that temple, what's going to happen? The holy temple—if you think building this temple is going to sanctify you as a group and bring God's presence and God's blessing and God's glory—you're wrong. Your contact with it is going to corrupt it and make it useless and uninhabitable for the presence and the glory of God. Corruption transfers to that which is holy. That which is holy isn't going to sanctify you just by contact.

So verse 14, Haggai answered and said, "So is this people and so is this nation before Me," says the Lord. "And so is every work of their hands, and what they offer is unclean." Note now, this is after the wonderful celebratory response to Haggai's prophecy and Zerubbabel and Joshua getting the people to build, and they finish it in time for the three feasts and all the rest of it. Here's the message.

Zechariah is saying, "Your ways and your deeds are evil. Turn from them." Haggai comes back and says, "Now carefully consider," verse 15, "from this day forward, from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the Lord." When was that? When was stone first laid upon stone? Fifteen years ago. Ezra chapter 3, right out beside that, Ezra chapter 3, fifteen years ago at least. Depending on whose calculations you read, it's anywhere from fifteen to twenty-three years earlier. Long time. Time enough to grow a child to an adult.

"From before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the Lord, since those days"—and that was a long time ago, nearly two decades ago—"when one came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were but ten." You stored twenty ephahs. You came back and there were only ten. What happened to the other ten? Mold, mildew, mice, varmints, vermin, theft. "When one came to a wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there's only twenty." Less than half of what should have come out of those grapes is actually there. "I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands."

This is after they returned from the land of captivity to the land of promise. From the days that you first put stone upon stone here, why do you think you have not been prospered? Why do you think you have not been blessed? Did you not get a clue that all of your efforts are blighted? By the way, next to blight and mildew you can put Deuteronomy 28:27, that talks about God's promise and the reasons for it. If you are disobedient, if you are faithless, here's what's coming. Remember the cycles of discipline and so on? Go back and read Deuteronomy 28:22, 27, along in there.

"I struck you with blight and mildew and hail." Now why did God do that? Is He vindictive? Is He implacable? He just wants a building, and they're not building it fast enough, so He's going to punish them? What was He looking for? What is He calling for all the way through Haggai and Zechariah? What has He said over and over again? Consider your ways and turn. Consider and turn. Why did He strike them with blight and mildew and hail? It's obvious. And yet they did not turn. "You did not turn to Me," says the Lord.

"Consider," verse 18, "now from this day forward, from the 24th day of the ninth month," and He quotes the date that we saw back in verse 10. Today is the 24th day of the ninth month. "From the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid until now." That's Ezra 3:10, the day the foundation was laid. Some people try to say, "Oh, well, that was just a couple of months ago when Haggai started prophesying." No, this foundation was laid explicitly in Ezra 3:10, years ago. Years and years and years ago.

And God has year by year by year crippled them. Mildew, blight, hail, minimized the fruitfulness of their efforts. They are supposed to get a message. They are supposed to respond. There are people who say, "Well, you know, whatever comes in your life, just take it as some sort of a blessing from God and just consider that it's all okay." There are reasons for adversity. God desires to bless us, not to harm us.

I want to commend to your attention a movie from 1962 that you've heard of. It's called *The Miracle Worker*, starred Anne Bancroft and introduced a very young Patty Duke. 1962, Anne Bancroft, Patty Duke, *The Miracle Worker*. It is the story of Helen Keller, and it is pretty faithful as a movie to the facts documented in the book that sparked the movie, spawned the movie. I commend that movie to your attention.

Right now I think you have to rent it for three or four dollars. Rent it. Watch it, because it makes this point. Helen Keller, being blind and deaf, did not understand when Annie Sullivan came and began signing to her in her palm so that she could feel the shapes. She didn't understand. She didn't understand what was going on when Annie Sullivan would not let her walk around the table and grab food off of people's plates, wouldn't tolerate her tantrums, wouldn't give her everything she wanted out of pity. The parents remonstrate and rebuke and resist Anne Sullivan's efforts with their daughter because they think it's cruel and unloving.

Watch the movie and then think about God's dealings with His people. Think about God's dealings with us. There are many hardships, many deprivations. Sometimes we have blight and mildew and hail that comes into our lives. Other times it is just completely incomprehensible to us. Why are things not going well? Why are we not happy and having our desires, our self-gratifying desires, satisfied? "Well, I would be happy if I had this. I would be happy if that came to pass."

Watch the movie and think of it in terms of the spiritual analogy to God's deep and abiding love, patience, and long-suffering with us. Watch the movie. You can forget everything in this Bible class if you just remember the spiritual lesson illustrated through the events depicted in that movie. You will see Haggai chapter 1 and chapter 2 and Zechariah 1:1 through 6 come to life as you watch it. Please watch it. Find it. Pay for it. Church will reimburse you if you don't have the money. Write us a letter. We'll send you the four or five dollars. You need to watch that movie. If you saw it in the past, watch it again and have Haggai open in front of you. It makes absolute sense out of this passage. We just saw it, what, last night? You need to watch it. It resonates with many wonderful biblical truths.

And with that, we will close for this evening. But remember, God's glory is going to come and fill the temple for people who desire His presence, who find it pleasant, who find it precious, and for no one else. Without it, there is blight and mildew and hail in perpetuity. Without it, there are the curses coming true in Deuteronomy chapter 28. Why? Because we do not consider our ways. We do not turn. We do not cultivate the desire for the eternal peace that God is offering.

God says, "In this place with My glory comes peace," peace that passes understanding, the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ, fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace. What a tremendous blessing, both now and in the ages to come, to have that created for us, have it as our possession and our heritage. It is worth pursuing. It is worth being shaken out of our complacency and out of our support structures, out of what we consider to be solid rock, and look for that rock that the Lord Jesus is talking to Peter about in Matthew chapter 16.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. We'll pick up our study here in Haggai next week.

Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. We pray that in the hands of Your Holy Spirit, it will have its transforming and renewing effect in our souls so that we can become everything that You have put us in this world to be, and we'll be prepared for service and function in the life that is to come. We pray it in Jesus' name, amen.