



BETHEL  
PRESBYTERIAN

## MINISTRY OF THE WORD

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Volume 20 Issue 9

February 28, 2021

### A Cure for the Disappointment

Haggai 2:1-9

If you haven't discovered it by now, it is only a matter of time, some of the greatest setbacks and discouragements we encounter as Christians most often come on the heels of spiritual renewal!

Recall Elijah's conflict with the Prophets of Baal. The land had suffered under a three-year drought on account of God's people going after the Baals! So, Elijah confronted King Ahab in which the prophet proposed a test to prove the true God: Baal or Yahweh.

1 Kings 18:23-24, “Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox, and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it. Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, He is God.’ And all the people answered and said, ‘That is a good idea.’”

If there ever was something Baal would be good at, it would be lighting the sacrifice on fire, after all he was the god of weather and thunder and lightning. So, after the 450 prophets of Baal spent all day trying to appease Baal — praying, begging, ranting, even mutilating themselves — to no avail, Elijah doused his sacrifice with water — three times until the wood was sitting in water! And then Elijah offered a simple prayer AND God acted.

1 Kings 18:38-39, “Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, ‘The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God.’”

Now, you would think that after this, Elijah would never again feel shy or embarrassed about serving the Lord, but instead spend his ministry boldly following the Lord! And yet, that is NOT what he did! Immediately following this victory, the wicked queen Jezebel (who brought Baalism en masse to the Northern Kingdom) verbally threatened Elijah’s life and the prophet ran like a frightened bunny!

1 Kings 19:2-4, “Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, ‘So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time [the prophets of Baal who died during the competition].’ And he [Elijah] was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, ‘It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers.’”

And so it has been with many servants of Christ both in Redemptive History and Church History. Great acts of service and devotion typically are followed by serious valleys of doubt, disillusionment, and despair. Such was the case in Haggai’s day.<sup>1</sup> And such is the case in our own!

A couple of weeks back we looked at “An Anatomy of Spiritual Renewal” from Haggai 1:12-15. Perhaps God used that passage to bring a mini revival in your own life. If He did, by now no doubt you have found yourself shrinking back to old patterns and new discouragements in your walk. So much for that renewal! So, what are you to do? What is God’s prescription when we are in the dumps spiritually? What is God’s cure for the disappointment that typically follows spiritual revival?

Haggai 2:1, “On the twenty-first of the seventh month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai

the prophet saying<sup>2,3</sup>...”-

God gave this message to Haggai on the seventh and last day of the Feast of Tabernacles — a feast which stressed their pilgrim status as God’s people<sup>4</sup> (cf. Leviticus 23:33–34). God’s timing couldn’t have been more perfect! For at that moment, God’s people were a pilgrim people living as aliens and strangers! That being said, the time indicators in this text also tell us that God’s people now are twenty-six days into their efforts at rebuilding the temple. And things were going incredibly slow! They’d been at it roughly a month and still they hadn’t even cleared the temple mount? I wonder how many of the Jews who came to the temple mount at the climax of the Feast of Tabernacles uttered those very words?!

If I you were living at this time, how could we not be discouraged?!<sup>5</sup> “What have we gotten ourselves into here? I never dreamt it would be this tough!” And it was which prompted Haggai’s third oracle.

Haggai 2:2-3, “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? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison?’”

I love this! Haggai doesn’t candy coat it! The progress they had made was negligible! They lacked the skill, manpower, and resources which Solomon had when he built the first temple- and that took twelve years to complete it)!<sup>6</sup> James Montgomery Boice said of this text:

In these words God is acknowledging the situation as they saw it. He is not trying to cover it up. He is not telling them that they have overly idealized those earlier days or that they are putting themselves down too much. He begins by acknowledging that things really were bad. (Boice, 2006, p. 474)

Clearly, God’s people had good cause to be discouraged! In fact, they would labor like this for four more years until they considered the temple structure to be completed- but even then, what a disappointment!<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, this third oracle was given in the context of massive disappointment, failed dreams, and the feeling of being underwhelmed at the work they were doing!

Has the work of God’s kingdom become work to you? Has just “being faithful” become a massive task? Are you walking in the footsteps of Elijah? How about THE Servant of:

Isaiah 49:3-4a, “‘You are My Servant, Israel, in Whom I will show My glory.’ But I said, ‘I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity...’”

God truly has given us much by way of work and ministry. Yet in a world that is stingy when it comes to the yielding of its fruit (Romans 8:20), it doesn’t take much before we can feel discouraged!

So why the struggle? If God is all powerful and sovereign, why does God allow us to struggle so? I mean, why didn't God just miraculously rebuild the Temple for His people overnight? Listen to God's response when His people were forced to make bricks without straw:

Exodus 6:6-7, "Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.'"

You have to understand something very important when it comes to God's redemptive work in this earth... the focus is NOT on you or me, BUT the Lord! Matthew 15 records Christ's healing of the lame, crippled, and dumb.

Matthew 15:31, "So that the multitude marveled as they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel."

Think of it. The ministry God gave many in Christ's day was that of illness and sickness. You can just imagine how difficult it would have been to be those people. Yet why did God ordain such a lot for them? It was SO THAT they might be used to bring glory to God! We see it in John. Lazarus' sickness and eventual death had nothing to do with Lazarus, BUT everything to do with God.

John 11:4, "But when Jesus heard it, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it.'"

Herein is a very important principle when it comes to our Christians walks. It is NOT ultimately about us, for us, or unto us! It is that God "might be glorified through us"! In the words of Paul, it is to "...the praise of the glory of His grace" (Ephesians 1:6a)! Jack Miller put it this way:

God's holiness is not only about his righteousness, but also about his power. The job we have to do, we cannot do in our own power. We work hard, but we must realize that we also are spectators watching from the sidelines to see what God is doing. Our work will never be about ourselves as conquerors; it will only be about God, the Conqueror. This is how it was for Moses, and this is how it is for us. (Sermon preached on Exodus 6)

This no doubt is what prompted David to say, "In the morning, O Lord, Thou wilt hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to Thee and eagerly watch." (Psalm 5:3) Our call is to labor at that which God has placed before us, and then to watch as God shines the spotlight on His grace, His glory, and His greatness!

This no doubt is why this Third Oracle of Haggai transitioned into a description of God and so

that which ought to be our comfort the trials and difficulties of life. We tend to measure ourselves based on the fruit of our labors; this text demonstrates that we must NOT do that! Well then, what ought to be our focus in life? It must NEVER be on what we would accomplish for the Lord, BUT on what God shows us of Himself IN the struggle.

### Comfort/Encouragement, vv. 4-6a.

Haggai 2:4-6a, “‘But now take courage<sup>8</sup>, 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; [What ought to be that which encourages them? NOT their work NOR the promise that everything was going to be alright, BUT that which God reveals about Himself in their suffering...] for I am with you, ‘says the Lord of hosts. As for the promise which I made you<sup>9</sup> when you came out of Egypt<sup>10,11</sup>, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!’ For thus says the Lord of hosts...”

In other words, open your eyes and allow your trials to raise your gaze to Christ and so behold Him in a way you have not before! If they did that at this point, they would behold three things about God.

God Almighty- the Maker of heaven and earth, who upholds all things by the word of His power was “with them”!<sup>12</sup> This expression does NOT simply mean that God condescended to accompany them, BUT that He was in fact working “for them” in and through all things!! And so, yes, the surrounding peoples at this time were attacking them and making their work much more difficult than it needed to be (Ezra 5:3-5). Yes, these wicked individuals even wrote a letter to Darius in which they named the leaders of those overseeing the work (cf. Ezra 5:6-17)- with the implied threat that they could become the enemies of Darius (recall, it was Cyrus who had commissioned them eighteen years prior, NOT Darius)! YET, God Almighty was with/for them! This is the message which God has given His people again and again throughout Redemptive History when they were sore oppressed.

When Joshua was thrown into leadership upon the death of Moses, this is what God told Him:

Joshua 1:9: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is WITH YOU wherever you go.”

It is what Paul told all of us as we face a hostile, hateful world.

Romans 8:31b: “...If God is FOR US, who is against us?”

In fact, there is a striking parallel between Haggai’s exhortation here and the words of Jesus when He came to His disciples on the water.

Mark 6:50b, “But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, ‘Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.’” - it is as if Christ were quoting from Haggai!

So, receive these words today and at all times. May this be your glory, boast, and joy in the trial: You are not alone! I NOT ONLY am with you, BUT I am FOR YOU! Now if that were not enough, secondly notice that Haggai assured the people that “[God’s] Spirit is abiding in your midst.”

Christian, when you think of “God’s Spirit abiding in the midst of His people” you think of Elisha’s servant who was frightened on account of the Arameans who had surrounded the city seeking his and Elijah’s death. Recall Elisha’s prayer:

2 Kings 6:17, “Then Elisha prayed and said, ‘O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.’ And the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

And then do you know what happened? God struck the armies with blindness (v. 18) and Elisha and his servant left the city unmolested! You say, “How is this different from the first promise that ‘God is with us’?” God being with us speaks of Him being FOR US. God’s “Spirit abiding in our midst” places all the resources of the Lord at our disposal at all times- for He is “in our midst”!<sup>13</sup> This is what Paul was getting at when he wrote this in Ephesians:

Ephesians 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with EVERY spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

Boice wrote of the text in Haggai:

God does not say, as we might say to someone in order to buck them up, ‘Go on, I know you can do it. Just be strong. Give it your best.’ That advice might be valuable at a football rally or when a person is waiting to participate in a talent contest, but it is not valuable in spiritual things, simply because we are not equal to our spiritual tasks. Like Moses, we are weak. Like Joshua, we face tasks that are impossible by normal means. Like Solomon, we are not the heroes our forefathers were. But we can be strong and we can be equal to the task, because God is with us. In his strength we can be courageous. (Boice, 2006, pp. 475-476)

Listen to how Paul put it when he wrote this:

Ephesians 3:20, 21, “Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

If a wealthy man gave you “out of” his wealth he might give you a dollar. If he gave you “according” to his wealth he’d give you everything he had! And that is what God promises to give us here!

Haggai assured the people that God is all powerful such that no one can stand in His way!

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In response to His people's struggle, God invoked a name that spoke of the magnitude of His glory, might, power, and grace, "...do not fear! For thus says the Lord of hosts..."- this is a military expression stressing the massive numbers of warriors at a general's command. Yet in the case of God, the focus is NOT on human warriors, BUT angelic warriors! He is "the Lord of the host of angels"! (Haggai 2:5b-6)

1 Samuel 4:4a, "So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts who sits above the cherubim..." (cf. 2 Sam. 6:2)

The name therefore speaks of unthwartable power as well as the majesty and glory of God...

Psalm 24:7-10, "Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in! Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates, and lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in! Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory."

And what happens when "The Lord of Hosts" goes with a person/people? That person/people thrive.

1 Chronicles 11:9, "And David became greater and greater, for the Lord of hosts was with him."

Do you understand the message here? In light of the two points we have just considered, we keep from despair and struggle in our service in God's Kingdom when we see that what God is doing at any given moment in our lives is NOT about us, BUT about His honor and glory! We simply are the vessel which God has deigned to shine through! Accordingly, God's individual purpose and program for each of His children is that in their labors and life they come to a greater apprehension of the God who is with them- His glory, majesty, honor, goodness, sovereignty, and grace!

Now, Haggai could have ended here, but he doesn't! Rather, he chose to close out this section by giving God's people a peak into His ultimate plan.

The Bible literally is filled with such glances and so exposés of where God's plan for our lives is headed! Notice that which was given to Haggai's generation.

### A Foreshadowing of the Plan of God, vv. 6b-9.

Haggai 2:6b-9, "For thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Once more in a little while [the language denotes a sense of urgency; this is a top priority of God!], I am going to shake<sup>14</sup> the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. And I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations<sup>15</sup>; and I will fill this house with glory,' says the Lord of hosts. '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 shall give peace,' declares the Lord of hosts."

In this survey of this prophetic book, we do NOT have time to unpack each of the statements God makes here. Perhaps that could be part of your study this week?! Yet, consider with me the big picture. As it relates to the Second Temple:

- When after 520 BC did God "shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land"? When did God "shake the nations"?
- When did the nations "come with their wealth" and willingly place it in the Second Temple?
- When did God "fill [the Second Temple] with [His shekinah] glory"?
- When did the glory of the Second Temple "far exceed the former glory" [of the first temple] when God's awesome presence dwelt there?

One cannot name a moment in time or even an era! The Second Temple rebuilt in 516 BC and updated by Herod would never become that which is described here! So, what then is this "foreshadowing" in reference to?

Commentaries almost universally says the same: This passage is a foreshadowing of God's redemptive plan which was/is bound up in Christ!<sup>16</sup> It is describing elements which would begin to be enjoyed at Christ's first advent and yet would come to its fullness at His Second Advent! Consider these points:

- Christ (Matthew 12:6; Luke 2:28–32; John 2:19–22) and His body (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) are referred to by God as His "temple"! Our text is talking about a future temple (Haggai 2:8, 9)!
- When Christ established the temple of His body- the church- the "heavens and earth most certainly shook"! Think of the massive earthquake that occurred when Christ died (Matthew 27:45, 54; 28:2). Our text speaks of God "once more shaking the heavens and the earth" (Haggai 2:6b).<sup>17,18</sup>
- John prophesied of a time when "the nations bring their wealth" into the temple which ultimately is heaven (Rev. 21:24; cf. also 21:10-27). Our text speaks of "the wealth of all nations" being brought into the temple (Haggai 2:7; cf. also Isaiah 60:11; 61:6; 66:12).<sup>19</sup>
- There would come a time when God's glory would re-enter this world in a temple- the temple of Christ (John 1:14). And though mankind rejected this glory, nevertheless on the Last Day that glory once again will come back to the world in "the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:30). Our text speaks of "the latter glory of this house being greater than the former glory" (Haggai 2:9a).
- Romans 5:1 speaks of "a peace with God" that only comes in Christ. Our text speaks of a future temple where God "shall give peace" (Haggai 2:9).<sup>20</sup>

The Second Temple in no way fulfilled the prophecy of Haggai 2:6-9! Yet Scripture is replete



with passage after passage which attribute the blessings referenced here to Christ! That means the legacy on which God's people in Haggai's day labored — and that which you and I currently are laboring — was NOT a physical temple which would be destroyed in 70 AD, BUT THE Temple which Christ established in His first advent, which He currently is building, and which will come in its fullness at the Second Coming of Christ! Pieter Verhoef, speaking of this text, wrote this:

The terms of the promise will be fully realized when Christ comes again. Then we will receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:26–28). Then the glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it (Rev. 21:24, 26). It is true that the temple as a sanctuary in itself will disappear (Rev. 21:22), but the essence of this promise will be fulfilled in the New Jerusalem, where 'the dwelling of God is with men' (Rev. 21:3; cf. in more detail J. Ridderbos). (Verhoef, 1987, p. 109)<sup>21</sup>

I love this! Aside from the glimpse at the character and glory of God who goes with us, God gave His discouraged people a glimpse into eternity and the Temple that they ultimately were working to build! That is where everything in the life of the child of God is headed!

It makes me think of the story of the brick layers. After the great fire of 1666 that leveled London, the world's most famous architect at the time, Christopher Wren, was commissioned to rebuild St Paul's Cathedral.

On a summer day in 1671, Christopher Wren observed three bricklayers working on one of the walls. He asked the first bricklayer, "What are you doing?" And he said, "I'm working hard laying bricks to feed my family."

He asked the same question of the second bricklayer who said, "I'm building a wall."

When he came to the third the answer he received stood out, "I'm building a great cathedral to The Almighty."

It was the latter conviction that Haggai wanted God's people to see as they worked on the temple! It is what we ultimately are about in every advance and set back in our lives! We are participating in the building of a Cathedral that will last for eternity unto the glory and praise of God!

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## End Note(s)

<sup>1</sup> “Now that four weeks of work had been done since the rebuilding of the temple actually started (1:15a), people coming up to the Feast of Tabernacles passed unfavorable comments on the project. It would be four years before the restoration was complete, but already they were expressing the view that the new temple could never be the equal of the old (D. R. Jones).” (Verhoef, 1987, p. 93)

<sup>2</sup> “As though to reassure such people Haggai delivered his second major sermon on the last ordinary day of the Feast of Booths. The twenty-second day of the month was a solemn rest-day (Leviticus 23:39).” (Baldwin, 1972, p. 50)

<sup>3</sup> “An additional motivation was the remembrance that on the seventh month, so many years ago, Solomon had dedicated the glorious temple with its sacred objects (1 K. 8:2).” (Verhoef, 1987, p. 94)

<sup>4</sup> There’s a twist of irony in the sermon as well, since the prophet has called the people to address the matter of YHWH’s homelessness, as they build and live in their temporary shelters in commemoration of their own homelessness during the exodus sojourn.” (Hill, 2012, pp. 75-76)

<sup>5</sup> “Fifteen years before, the people had returned to Jerusalem from Babylon and had laid the foundation of the temple that had been destroyed by the earlier Babylonian invasion. As Ezra tells it, there was a celebration of some sort on this occasion. The priests put on their vestments. The people assembled. Together they sang and gave great shouts of praise to God for his goodness in allowing the foundations for his house to be re-laid. ‘But,’ we are told, ‘many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid’ (Ezra 3:12). The older people remembered the temple that had been and realized that nothing they could do in this later day would ever make their temple equal to the earlier one. ¶ Something like this must have happened in Haggai’s day too, on the occasion of the people’s return to the building. As the people returned to their task they must have been overcome with depression as they realized that their new structure would never equal the one that had been lost.” (Boice, 2006, p. 473)

<sup>6</sup> “We can guess that during the intervening weeks efforts were concentrated on clearing the site of rubble, redressing stone that was fit for use, testing for safety the walls that still remained (for we know that even after bombing a surprising amount of a stone building may remain standing), and organizing teams of workmen for their particular tasks. Such preparations on a sixty-year-old ruin, without any mechanical aids, would tax the endurance of even the most enthusiastic, hence the need of encouragement. But there was another factor. ¶ Progress would have been delayed during the seventh month by the major festivals on which no work would be allowed. In addition to sabbath rest days, the first day of the month was the Feast of Trumpets, and the tenth the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:23–32). Then on the fifteenth day the Feast of Booths began, when the whole population moved out of their homes to live in leafy shelters for a week in memory of the exodus wanderings. It was also an occasion of rejoicing in the harvest, through which, year by year, they proved God’s faithfulness to his promises (Leviticus 23:33–36, 39–44; Deuteronomy 16:13–15). It would be understandable if the enthusiastic, longing to see some evidence of progress, were impatient with holy days.” (Boice, 2006, pp. 49-50)

<sup>7</sup> Eventually, centuries later Herod would remodel the temple and make it opulent, something that would overwhelm the senses! Yet in 520 BC, 26 days into the rebuilding process, it most certainly didn’t look that way!

<sup>8</sup> “The Hebrew verb *hāzaq* denotes a frame of mind which enables one to pursue or initiate something with fervor and diligence (cf. Joshua 1:6, 7, 9; Judg. 7:11).” (Verhoef, 1987, p. 98)

<sup>9</sup> Literally, “cut with you”! This is covenant language!!

<sup>10</sup> “The prophet’s reference to Egypt (2:5) sets the hortatory tone and establishes the covenant theme for Haggai’s second sermon. The citation is clearly a deliberate appeal to the historical traditions connected with the Hebrew exodus from slavery under the pharaoh. Haggai is probably alluding to Isaiah’s oracles announcing the second exodus and the restoration of the Hebrews from Babylonian captivity (e.g. Isaiah 40:3–5; 41:17–20; 42:14–16).” (Hill, 2012, p. 75)

This is notable. It is interesting to me that Ezekiel likewise borrowed from the Exodus motif in his description of the future temple that God would erect in Christ!! See my introductory sermon on Ezekiel 40-48, “A Message of Comfort and Hope to a Pilgrim People.”

<sup>11</sup> “Echoes of covenant ideas and themes resound in the vocabulary of Haggai’s second message (2:1–9). Specifically, the prophet alluded to YHWH’s covenant ties with Israel by mentioning the land (2:2, 4;

cf. Genesis 12:1, 7; Exod. 3:8), the temple (2:3, 7, 9; an implicit reference to that place where YHWH would establish his name; Deuteronomy 12:11; 14:23; 16:2) and the inauguration of peace (2:9; a key element of the new covenant promises of Jeremiah [30:10; 32:37] and Ezekiel [34:25; 37:26]). More striking are the assurance formulas (Be strong, 2:4 [3 times]; and Do not fear, 2:5). Both are commonly found in covenantal contexts (e.g. Genesis 15:1; 26:24; Exod. 20:20; Isa. 57:15)." (Andrew E. Hill, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, TOTC, p. 83)

<sup>12</sup> "The restatement of the reality that God's Spirit remains among his people is important (cf. 2:4). Such reassurance was necessary, given Ezekiel's earlier vision of the glory of the Lord abandoning the Jerusalem temple prior to the Babylonian exile (Ezekiel 10:18). The restoration community needed to know that this tragic chapter of Hebrew history had now ended." (Hill, 2012, p. 77)

<sup>13</sup> "The reference here rather corresponds with the function of the Spirit as it was expressed in Isa. 63:7–14, especially vv. 11–14: 'Where is he who put in the midst of them his holy Spirit, who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses.... Like cattle that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest.... So thou didst lead thy people, to make for thy self a glorious name' (cf. Isa. 44:3; 32:1–15; Zechariah 4:6)." (Verhoef, 1987, pp. 100–101)

<sup>14</sup> "The verb shake (Hebrew *rā'aš*) is an onomatopoetic word and denotes quaking and violent upheaval in the natural order. The term is associated with the language of theophany in the OT, the convulsions of creation in reaction to the appearance of YHWH (Isaiah 24:18; Ezekiel 38:20; Joel 2:10; 3:16)." (Hill, 2012, p. 79)

<sup>15</sup> This is ironic in light of Pieter Verhoef's observation. The first temple was robbed many times. Now in a total reversal, the temple referenced here would be funded by nations! Verhoef wrote, "It is important to evaluate the former state of the temple. It surely had lost much of its previous splendor during successive raids and the plundering of its contents. In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem and carried off the treasures of the temple of the Lord (1 K. 14:25, 26). When Hazael king of Aram attacked Jerusalem, Joash king of Judah took all the sacred objects dedicated by his fathers and sent them as ransom to Hazael (2 Kings 12:17, 18). The same 'plundering' of the temple objects, this time in deference to the king of Assyria, was done by King Ahaz (2 Kings 16:17, 18) and later by Hezekiah, who redeemed Jerusalem in return for 'all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord ... the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the doorposts' (2 Kings 18:13–16). In the eighth year of his reign (597 B.C.) Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon 'removed all the treasures from the temple of the Lord ... and took away all the gold articles that Solomon had made for the temple of the Lord' (2 K. 24:12–13, NIV)." (Verhoef, 1987, p. 96)

<sup>16</sup> "...it seems preferable to agree with the explanation according to which the Hiphil of the verb *ra'ah*, 'cause to quake,' 'shake (violently),' 'belongs to the terminology of the epiphany during the holy war, when God will intervene on behalf of his people (cf. Judg. 5:4 par. Psalm 68:9 [Eng. 8]; 2 Sam. 22:8 par. Psalm 18:8 [Eng. 7]; Isaiah 13:13; 24:18; etc.). The divine intervention also causes the nations (v. 7) to 'shake' (cf. Exodus 15:16; Isa. 24:18; Ezekiel 38:20; Habbakuk 3:6). The motifs are derived from the universal and the military-political context of the Day of the Lord: not only the earth, but heaven and earth, the whole universe will be affected by the divine shaking (so Koole, Van der Woude)." (Verhoef, 1987, pp. 102–103)

<sup>17</sup> "The verb is the Hiphil participle, which conveys that the Lord will cause a series of shakings. Earthquake had early become a symbol for God's supernatural intervention, especially after the severe one in the eighth century, by which the prophecy of Amos is dated (Amos 1:1), and from which he found imagery for his message (8:8; 9:15). Isaiah took it up (Isaiah 2:13–21; 13:13; 29:6), as did Joel (3:16) and Ezekiel (38:20). Earthquakes come without warning and there is no escaping their terrors. Haggai foresees the whole universe in such a series of convulsions that every nation will gladly part with its treasures." (Baldwin, 1972, p. 52)

<sup>18</sup> In fact, Hebrews 12 took Haggai's words here and applied them to the Last Day (cf. Hebrews 12:26–27)! And so also was the use of this expression in Ezekiel 33:19–33; Is. 13:13; 24:18–23; Joel 3:15–21!

<sup>19</sup> "In my opinion, the 'desired of all nations' refers to people, in the sense that 'the chosen, the elect out of all nations, those gentiles whom God has from eternity foreknown and predestinated,' will increase the glory of the true temple, which is the church. That is, the ultimate glory of God's house will not be a mere physical glory but a spiritual glory that comes from having an increasingly large host of all tongues and nations enter into it." (Boice, 2006, p. 477)

<sup>20</sup> "According to the true prophets, including Haggai, the peace as part of the eschatological promises presupposes the renewal of the covenantal relationship between God and his people and consists of all

the blessings of the messianic age. The prerequisite for the people to share in this peace is faith. "If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all" (Isaiah 7:9, NIV)... The promise of 'peace' in 'this place' also has an eschatological perspective, in full accord especially with the message of Isaiah. In Haggai, however, the messianic motif is not explicit but is implied in the concept of the pilgrimage of the nations toward Jerusalem (cf. Isaiah 2:1–4), with the wealth of their 'precious things' (cf. Isaiah 60:2; 66:12)." (Verhoef, 1987, p. 107)

<sup>21</sup> He also wrote, "...the Old Testament temple finds its ultimate fulfillment in the 'Lord of the temple,' who is greater than the temple (Matt. 12:6), namely, Jesus Christ (cf. John 2:13–22). The final fulfillment coincides with the consummation, when the temple would be superseded by the Lord Almighty and the Lamb as the city's temple (Revelation 21:22–27)." (Verhoef, 1987, p. 106)