

Shaken and glorified

For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

Haggai 2:6-7

To the remnant of Jews who had returned from exile upon the decree of Cyrus to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and yet had been discouraged from continuing by local adversaries (Ezra 4), came Haggai and Zechariah to remind them, and especially their leaders Zerubbabel and Joshua, that the work of the LORD was to be completed. By the time Haggai's prophecy came, the people had become complacent, dwelling in their own "ceiled houses" while the temple of the LORD still lay with only the foundation started. As Haggai exhorted them to "consider their ways," with respect to what they had originally come to accomplish, versus how they had been diverted to attending more upon their own houses and farms, with little yield, he commands them in verse four to "be strong." Yet he appealed not to their own strength, which had waned with their zeal, but to the continuing promise, "for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts."

Then, in spite of the clear observation that this new temple would not be as magnificent in *sight* as the previous temple erected by Solomon, the LORD promised "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former" (verse nine). In the midst of these statements lay our text, referring to the shaking of the heavens, the earth and the nations and directing their desires toward the glory with which the LORD would fill this house. While in one sense Wesley perhaps captured the beginning of this promise with the stanza, "Come Desire of nations, come fix in us Thy humble home," we are told clearly by the writer to the Hebrews (Hebrews 12:25-29) that this prophecy was yet to be fulfilled, when the things created will be removed and replaced by those that cannot be shaken (cf. II Corinthians 4:18).

Therefore, let us learn with those Jews that there remains a work to be completed. While the Desire of nations has come to call unto Himself a people for His name out of every nation and tribe, etc., He will continue to build "up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:5) that will grow "unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22). To join in this work He has called us, to show forth His praises to all whom He calls out of darkness into His marvelous light (I Peter 2:9). Therefore, we should consider our ways, and be strong in His might, as we look toward the day when He will shake the heavens and the earth, as Peter concludes, "Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat[.] Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:12-13), when the house will be filled with His glory.