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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
on Sunday evening 26 March 1933

Haggai 2 verses 6 and 7

"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".

Christ, and the world as it is lying in wickedness, can never agree. If we believe this we shall look for no improvement in the world until this great word is fulfilled - "I will shake all nations". Yet once, it is a little while, for one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. It was long before Christ came, about 500 years before His incarnation, and yet it was a little while. I will shake the heavens, all authorities, and the earth, defiled by man's wickedness, and the seas and the dry land, and I will shake all nations. This the Lord has been doing and will do until the end comes. We see it in the church of God. There were great shakings in Ephesus when the gospel was taken there and preached by the Apostle Paul and, notwithstanding the great tumult, and the crying, hour after hour, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians", God overthrew that idolatrous system. In the case of that blessed church of Ephesus (Acts 19 v 28) of which we read, and Philippi and Colosse and the seven churches in Asia, there were fulfilments of this word - "I will shake all nations" The time came when God shook the empire of Mede, the empire of Persia; when He shook the empire of Rome and the gospel was brought with more or less light and life and power into those regions; when, in what we now know as the Balkans, God shook the nations - Macedonia and other places received the gospel - and wherever the gospel is received, there has been a shaking, a real shaking out of the idolatry in which God found them. The time came when the darkness of popery

covered the earth practically, and God began to shake that when the Reformation came, came and overthrew that abominable system in Europe. And the blessed Reformation reached England and God shook us out of the popery that bound us hand and foot and blinded us as a nation. This shaking of the heavens and of the earth means that God will remove the powers that oppose Him whatever they may be; He will shake them till they are destroyed. The stone that is cut out of the mountain without hands is destined to fill the whole earth. When it does so, then the knowledge of the glory of God will be in the nations of the world, just as the waters cover the sea. The knowledge of the glory of God will overthrow everything that comes against it. We have no reason to look for improvement in our nation. Statesmen speak as if things are going to improve, but that word will be fulfilled - I will shake this nation that has forgotten Me; this nation that has made friendship with the Pope; this nation that has in it modernism, anglo-catholicism, the centenary of which is to be held this year, and the so called Protestant Archbishops and Bishops are sanctioning it, and asking all church people to patronise it. These things in our nation are against God. Modernism, with all its abominations and so called assurance of knowledge, assured results of knowledge, these are an offence to God, and I am sure they are an offence to every gracious person who hears of them or reads of them; must be. And we shall find that word to be true - God is not mocked; whatsoever a man, and whatsoever a nation, soweth, that shall he or it also reap.

This shaking comes to individuals, to persons, and when God begins to shake a person, to shake his heavens, and his prospects, his designs, his pride, his vanity, his corrupted reason, his vile affections, his idolatries, then it is like shaking him to pieces; he finds no rest in any of them. If he looks above him there is only clouds that he can see; if he looks to the earth, there is dimness and darkness of anguish; if he looks into himself he sees enmity against God, ignorance of God's way of salvation; he just sees himself to be a lost, hell-deserving sinner; a terrible shaking. It takes away hope; it kills false confidence; it discovers to the very foundation of it, human

nature as fallen; it brings the sinner into a destitute condition of feeling; it overturns and overturns and overturns him until he shall come whose right it is, and woe be to that sinner in his feelings, in his apprehensions, in his judgment. But this is for a purpose; this is mercy; this is to save that person from the destruction that shall come upon the nations that persist in their enmity and rebellion and idolatry, for, when this shaking has taken place, then the desire of all nations shall come, and of this it is that I desire to speak a little this evening as enabled.

Whatever is desirable, whatever is holy, whatever is pure, whatever is excellent, whatever is durable, you will find in the Person of Jesus Christ. Hence He is called the desire of all nations, because there is nothing in the universe, in heaven, that is pure, that is desirable, which is not found in Him. He possesses all excellencies, divine attributes and perfections, human beauty and fulness, and the concentration of all these things is so in Him, as that He is called the desire, the Person whom the shaken nations and shaken persons shall desire. Desire arises from a sense of the suitableness of what is desired, of the beauty of what is desired, of the everlasting excellency of what is desired, and these are seen to be in the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus, and it is therefore true as Christ said of Mary - She has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her. Whenever Christ is seen by faith by one whom God has shaken to pieces and shaken out of himself, He is the object, the great, chief, wonderful, glorious object of faith. Sooner or later that sinner says to Him - "Whom have I in heaven but Thee and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee". We sing, and sometimes sing feelingly we hope

Jesus is the one thing needful

I without Him perish must

That is a settled principle in the soul and that is sometimes the feeling of the soul - None but Jesus can do us good. And this desire is said to come. He shall come. And this means that He

does really in the spirit approach sinners and they see Him, and they feel Him. Until this takes place, and faith lays hold of Christ, there is no solid satisfaction. There are in the soul principles; there is conscience; there is understanding; there are faculties, and in these the great principles are fixed by God. Take conscience; until Christ comes there is no peace in the conscience. No, the blood of Christ alone can purge a guilty conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And until Christ comes there is no satisfaction for the understanding. As you understand by divine teaching what ruin is, you can never be satisfied until your understanding receives the knowledge of Christ and of your interest in Him. You have a will, and there is a principle of truth in it "He that doeth truth cometh to the light"; he wills to come; His whole will is that way. and what can content that will? What can make you lie down a contented person with your conscience, your understanding, and your will, and enable and cause you to say - I am at rest; my soul is at rest? Only this Desire. When He comes there is, so to speak, such a moving, that the very atmosphere is different; it affects you; you say, there may be no voice at the moment, you say - "Behold He cometh leaping o'er the mountains, skipping o'er the hills." Then your heart opens to receive Him; your faith opens her arms to clasp, to embrace Him; your understanding falls in with that and you say "I believe there is no beauty to be desired out of Christ; no salvation out of Christ; no contentment out of Christ. This is the Desire. When He comes He satisfies the soul with great abundance of mercy. The Apostle Peter speaks of much mercy. It is much mercy, and the word "much" is indeed a full word. Much mercy means there and everywhere in the scriptures, infinite mercy, beyond the stretch of human thought, beyond the reach of human intellect. It is God's mercy, much mercy, and it is manifested by the Holy Spirit working, and by the Spirit showing the resurrection of the Lord Jesus as the ground of all christianity; for if Christ be not raised from the dead, we are all in sin, we are all deceived, our religion is vanity, and of all men we are the most miserable.

This Desire, this Person of Jesus, fills the heart of a living child of God with gracious desire. "The desire of the

righteous is only good" that is, it is so fixed on Him that is good, that is goodness itself, as that that becomes true - "The desire of the righteous is only good". And why only good? Because you can say this - "One thing will I seek after (will I seek of the Lord) that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple". The beauty of the Lord is this Desire of all nations, Jesus Christ; all the beauty of God's goodness, of His love, of His salvation, Jesus Christ. It is beyond our imagination, and yet not beyond our experience, if He has come to us. I say our experience; I mean in a small measure, very small, and yet though small, true.

This Desire of all nations is to be in His people a fountain of life, a fountain of light. He is also the only strength of His people. This latter house had no glory in the eyes of the ancient men who had seen the first house in all its magnificence. This latter house had no comparison, no beauty to them. But, said the Lord, "I will fill this house with glory". What glory? The glory of Christ in it. And this leads one to make an observation, that when Christ comes to the temple He finds merchandise, thieves, sellers of this and sellers of that commodity, tables of money changers. You understand that, some of you, in your own experience - a den of thieves. The beautiful, painful, true hymn, with which this service was opened, is understood by the Lord's people. It is a painful hymn, but very true. I wish I did not know it as well as I do. (903). But what did this dear, gracious Lord Jesus do to this temple to which He came? He turned the merchants and their merchandise out. He used a whip of small cords; He used it effectually; He uses it still when He comes to cleanse a temple, a house for Himself, and He says - take these things away; this house is to be a house of prayer, not a house of merchandise, not a house of exchanging money, not a house of the world; take these things hence and make this house what it was designed to be, designed by God to be, a house of prayer. When Jesus comes He effectually does this. This is not perfection in the flesh, but it is the perfect work of the Spirit to distinguish between

what is born of the flesh and what is born of the Spirit, and it makes all the subjects of that discipline thankful for that discipline, thankful that God took the pains He did to cleanse and banish, for a time at least, these merchants and their merchandise. The Desire of all nations shall come.

Now a few words about one or two particular things that this Desire brings with him. He brings righteousness. There is not a soul in this chapel that is born again who does not desire that.

Righteousness to full perfection
Must be brought
Lacking nought
Fearless of rejection

This is not some nice religious feeling, not some warm vamped up feeling of being happy, but it is a sober, solemn coming of a righteousness that covers, that justifies, that deeply humbles a soul, that enables it to sing

Bold shall I stand in that great day
For who ought to my charge shall lay

Being justified freely by His grace. This righteousness is received. As Christ is received, so righteousness is received. Faith receives it and puts it on, and thus a sinner finds that Christ is his righteousness. This is the name that the church takes, it being given to her. "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our righteousness," which teaches the perfect union between the church and her Head and Saviour. You will be glad that Christ is your Lord and your righteousness and therefore that is your name - The Lord our righteousness. This, when received, gives a singular, a humble boldness. Yes - "Bold shall I stand". This enables a sinner to sing "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine." This makes Him the chiefest among ten thousand. He covers the soul; He justifies the ungodly that believeth in Him; He brings the sinner to this blessed spot. O he is glad that God has taken pains with him

to shake him out of his own fancied goodness and righteousness; to shake him out of his imagined strength and to bring him to this condition of utter ruin, and to say - Lord, here I am, a sinner, utterly ruined in myself, and now I receive and bless Thee for this divine gift of righteousness that justifies me from all things from which I could not be justified by the law of Moses. That is one blessing that the Desire of all nations brings.

Another is this - a sweet witness of the Spirit with the spirit of the child of God that he is a child of God. That witness is different from any other witness. You may have the witness of many gracious friends; they receive you into their affections as being children of the Most High God, but you may say - I do not know that I am a child of God. They may point out to you some evidences in your favour, some helps you have received, and of which you have spoken to them, and you may say - Well I dare not deny these things. If I was deceived, I was deceived, but I spoke the truth when I spoke of them, as far as I know matters, but I do not know that I am a child of God. When the Desire of all nations comes, and His blessed Spirit is in you, bearing a direct, a sacred, sweet, powerful witness to your adoption into the family of heaven, then you say - Now I know; I have hoped, now I know. I have desired, now I know. I have prayed for this, now I have it. The Desire of all nations brings it; He owns you; His Spirit owns you and bears His divine witness that so it is with you, you are a child of God. He comes as the Desire of all nations; He says - My kingdom will never stand with another kingdom, and the soul says in humble prayer - "Thy kingdom come"; Lord reign over me, reign in me. And his natural disposition, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, unbelief, infidelity, worldliness, worldly care, care of this world, care of what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, inordinate care, these are put down, and you are enabled to say - "My times are in Thy hand" O what this blessed Person does in this particular, you must experience to understand. When you can honestly say to Him - reign in me; Lord reign over me; take care of me; take care of my poor heart

and let it not wander hither and thither so, as it has done; put me into Thy blessed paths and keep me walking in them.

And I will fill this house with glory. Moses desired this glory; he had seen it; he saw it in Egypt in the wonderful signs that God gave in the plagues He sent upon Pharoah and his people, separating Israel from them. He saw that glory in the Lord making the sea a path as dry land for Israel to pass over in safety. He saw it in God bringing the waters of the sea over Pharoah and his host. He saw it in the manna; he saw it in the water; he saw it in the healing of the bitter waters by a tree cast into them. But now there came a day of terrible sin in Israel, their worshipping the golden calf, and God said He would not go up with them; He would send an angel before them. And Moses then desired to see more intimately than he had seen, the glory of God. You, as you get older, will find this, that you will want intimacy with God, closer union in your experience, clearer visions of the glory of God; visions of faith, waiting for the vision, without faith, in heaven. O what a sight, the sight of the glory of Christ is. It is a transforming sight. "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This Desire of all nations is this glory. He reflects His own glory on the soul and that puts the image of that glory on the soul; that fills the sinner with glory. I have given them the glory which Thou gavest Me". Think of it - the glory of the Mediator; the glory of the word given to the Mediator to preach, that glory Christ gave to His disciples and still gives to His disciples in different measures.

Now may the Lord look upon us. If there is any one in this congregation who does not know what this shaking is, the shaking of all nations, of the heavens, of the earth, of the sea and of the dry land, I would entreat God to give you an experience of it. O but it will make earth a poor place for you; it will make you understand that there is no place on earth for you to rest really, but it will only be a precursor of the blessedness of this Desire of all nations coming to you. Then you will say - I

bless God for the shaking to pieces that I have had. May He grant this mercy for His Name's sake.

And the glory that is given, that fills the sinner, the temple of the Lord (for the people of God are His temple) is but the beginning, the very little beginning of the glory that is to abide in them for ever and ever. Well, what more can I say this evening, only this, that I want it for myself more and more and I desire it for you, that individually and collectively, the church of Christ here and every gracious person, may have not an experience simply of wishing and of looking on religion as something pretty and to be desired, but a real waiting on and waiting for Jesus Christ to come; to take possession of you, to give you His righteousness, to give you His glory, that is to say, to give you Himself, for when He comes every other blessing that I have named, yea and all that I cannot name, He brings with Himself.

AMEN.