

“Lessons We Need to Learn”

Fixing Our Eyes Upon Jesus, Our High Priest

Hebrews 12:25-29

Dr. Jeff Stivason

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Jeff: Our heavenly Father, we are thankful for the day that You’ve provided. And every day is a gift from Your hand. We’re thankful for the night and for the rest that we received. Father, we ask that You will bless us today as we think today about not only this morning’s Bible study in Your word, but we also think about the day ahead and either our work, or our plans with family. We ask that You’ll bless those. We pray, Father, that as You lead us and guide us that we would be faithful stewards with our time. We pray that we would be gospel stewards, taking it with us wherever we go and making mention of it wherever we can.

Father, we ask that Your word this morning as we study would be like a leaven throughout our lives, taken up by Your Holy Spirit and used that we might be shaped and fashioned after Christ’s image. Father, we pray for our time in Your word, that it would be a blessing to each one of us and bring glory and honor to yourself.

Father, we do pray for the bishop, asking that Your hand would be upon him for good, praying for the doctors as they work to bring about stability to his heart condition. Father, we also pray for Dean’s family in their loss, and ask that You’ll comfort them and bless them. Father, thank You for our time together this morning. We pray that You’ll bless it. We ask it in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: All right. This morning we’re going to take a look at Hebrews chapter 12 and verses 25-29. We’re nearing the end of our time in Hebrews. And somebody asked where we’re headed. You know, the day after we finish Hebrews, where are we going? And I’ve had a lot of requests for Revelation. We’re not going to do Revelation. *(Laughter)* I like to come here and teach you.

Brave Man: Amen.

Jeff: So we’ll probably do something else. And I’ll let you know what that is in a couple weeks.

Brave Man: Yes. I was going to say that there are 65 other books.

Jeff: Yeah, there are 65 other books.

Brave Man: There you go.

Jeff: I’ll take a shot at one of those.

Don: How about the prayer of Jabez? *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Sit down, Don. *(Laughter)* All right. Let me read to you from our text a few short verses, Hebrews chapter 12:25-29. Listen to God’s word.

“See that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused Him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject Him who warns from heaven. At that time His voice shook the earth. But now He has promised, ‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens.’ This phrase ‘yet once more’ indicates the removal of things that are shaken, that is, things that have been

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made, in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken. And let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.”

Brave Man: This is the word of the Lord.

Jeff: This is the word of the Lord.

Brave Men: Thanks be to God. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Oh, I’m sorry; I messed that up. *(Laughter)* All right.

Brave Man: You’re forgiven.

Jeff: Thank you. Appreciate it. *(Laughter)* All right. So I want to talk to you today about four things. I want to talk about some introductory matters and very briefly so today. I want us to slide right into the text. And what I want us to grab is a very simple message. And yet it has some complexity to it. And hopefully I’ll be able to smooth that complexity out so you’ll be able to see and grasp what it is that the writer to the Hebrews is trying to get across in using the quote he uses from Haggai. And that’s really the hub of what we’re going to be looking at today. How is he using this Old Testament quote? And so we’ll look at that. But in looking at that I want us to notice *the warning in the text*. I want to notice *the lesson*. And that’s where the complexity could come in. But again, hopefully that won’t be unnecessarily complex. And then *the future*. I want us to notice some of the things that he says to us about how it is that we ought to live in light of the lesson that we learn. So those four things.

Let’s get started. I want us to think about some introductory matters. And let me put this guy’s name up just to get us started. Edmund Burke.

Edmund Burke was an 18th-century political analyst theorist. And he has a famous saying that where we may not be able to say, “Oh, that was Edmund Burke.” But certainly we know the saying. He is famous for saying, “*Those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat history.*” He’s also famous for writing “The Edmund Fitzgerald”, but that’s another sorry. That was a joke. *(Laughter)* Anyway—

Ted: I don’t get it.

Jeff: All right. *(Laughter)* So those who do not know history are destined to repeat it. An example of this: we all know, we can all probably think of our own examples. But this is an example. Remember when Putin invaded Crimea in the Ukraine? And he said that the reason he was doing it was because “my people are in the Ukraine, and I need to go and protect my people.”

Well, you know, the Secretary of State said, “Well, that’s sounds awfully familiar. That’s what Hitler said when he invaded Czechoslovakia and Rumania. ‘My people are there, and I need to go protect my people.’” So there’s a sense in which history repeats itself.

Now we’re Christians. And we know that there’s not a cyclical view to history. It’s not round and round it goes. It’s more like a spiral. We see events that are reminiscent of other events. But they’re never identical events. Why? Because when you think about history, you think about it moving toward an end, a climax. And so we often think about a spiral that has some similarities with previous events. But that spiral comes to a point, a

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climactic end. So that’s what we’re thinking about when we think about this quote in light of what we believe as Christians.

So let’s think about this lesson that we have for the church. We see this in Scripture. I don’t know if you have the quote or not, but I threw it up on the next slide. And it’s this. Paul says, *“Now these things took place.”* He’s talking about Old Testament things. *“These things took place for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.”*

So there’s a sense in which that phrase from Edmund burke appears in the Scripture itself. In other words, there are these things from history from which we are to learn, that we might not repeat the evils of history. And so this all helps to give us some direction in our thinking about today’s text. And I want us to do that and I want us to take that lesson.

But before we do, I want us to think about the warning that’s in the text prior to the lesson itself, okay? So let’s think about that together.

The warning is in verse 25. *“See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.”*

Now who is it who is speaking? That’s a basic question. Who is speaking? Now the answer is pretty basic. You’re probably thinking to yourself, well why in the world is Jeff asking us who is speaking in this text? We all know that the One who is speaking is God. God is the One who is speaking in this text.

But it raises an interesting issue, doesn’t it? It raises an interesting issue because of what we said the last time. For instance, you remember the text that we thought about the last time we were together, the texts that have the two mountains. There is the mount of Sinai which is terrible. Thunder and lightning and awesome fearfulness exude from that particular mountain. And then there was Mount Zion. And Mount Zion was that wonderful mountain, that mountain where there is joy and the gathering of the nations, and so on. There are these two mountains.

And remember what I said to you the last time we were together. I said to you that there is an error in the church today that goes all the way back to 150 A.D. And that error was the error of what? Do you remember what it was? Do you remember who the guy was?

Sig: Marcion.

Ted: The Marcion heresy.

Jeff: The Marcionite heresy said that the God of the Old Testament was different than the God of the New Testament. And I said that’s alive and well today, and you can find that heresy today in the church.

But I said to you that isn’t it interesting that in this text that the two mountains actually play into that heresy, because here we find this very clear, stark picture of the old which is terrifying, pictured under one mountain, and the new which is joyous, pictured under another mountain. And so don’t we have this disparity? And last time we talked about how we don’t have a disparity between the God of the Old and the God of the New.

And so when we find this idea that there’s this voice speaking, we need to understand one thing about it. We need to understand that that one voice speaking is the God who was the God of those at Sinai and the God of those at Zion. So it’s one God.

Now let me just point something out to you in Hebrews 12:18. Notice what it says. *“For we have not come to what may not be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and*

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gloom, and a tempest.” But the same God who spoke there on that mountain is the God who speaks at the beginning of this book. God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers and the prophets and in many portions and in many ways, including at Sinai, *“in these last days has spoken to us in His Son.”*

So the voice that speaks the warning is from the one God who is both at Sinai and at Zion. One voice, one God.

But not only that. God speaks today through His Son. And one of the ways in which this came home to us the last time we were together is that we were told that the blood of the Son speaks better than the blood of Abel.

And what did I say about that? I said that the blood of the Son speaks better than the blood of Abel because the blood of the Son speaks reconciliation. The blood of Abel could only cry out from the ground. But the blood of the Son speaks reconciliation.

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff greets a child in the audience.

Jeff: Noah, I didn’t greet you earlier. How are you? *(No verbal response. Laughter)* Good, that’s good. Good to have you with us, buddy.

Ted: That’s a non-sequitur.

Jeff: Yes. It’s okay, though, because I saw him. And then I thought, *I forgot to greet Noah.* No, don’t hide. Good to see you. *(Laughter)* All right. So any questions about that, any thoughts? Do you want to say anything before we move on?

Sig: Well, I have one.

Jeff: Yes?

Sig: Why was Mount Sinai so terrifying?

Brave Man: Read the book.

Jeff: Well, think about it.

Sig: Why was bringing the law so terrifying?

Jeff: Well, I think that what you have in that picture is descriptive enough. Well, let me not start with that picture. Let me start with something that we learned in the book of Hebrews. What was the lesson of the tabernacle? Do you remember what it was? He says that the Holy Spirit teaches this lesson about the tabernacle. Do you remember what it was?

Ted: No.

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff draws a picture.

Jeff: All right. The lesson that we learned is that this is the tabernacle. This is the division. This is the Holy Place. And this is the outer court. Do you remember what we were told? We were told that there is a funneling down. Everyone can be outside the court. But only a Levitical priest can be in the Holy Place. But only the High Priest can enter into the Holy of Holies, and that once a year.

And what was being taught by the Spirit is the restrictive nature, the exclusivity of the covenant itself. In other words, you can’t approach God without a mediator.

And so now go to Sinai. Think about Sinai. That’s the lesson of the covenant as it develops. And you know that you can’t approach Sinai without a mediator. And the God of Sinai has peels of thunder and lightning and a dark cloud covering the surface of the

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mountain. And He tells you that you can't come near the base of the mountain unless you be struck dead, all of these things. It's kind of fearful.

Sig: No, I understand. But why did God bring it in a terrifying way if He's trying to reconcile His people? Why is He scaring the hell out of them?

Jeff: Well I think it's a lesson, right? I think the lesson is that He is an all-consuming God. And that lesson actually hasn't changed. I mean, the lesson is that "I'm not a God to be trifled with." We want Him to be a God to be trifled with. But He's telling us that sin is serious, right? And He's teaching the people of Israel how serious sin is.

The trouble is that we look at Leviticus and we say, "Well, why are these scabs and moles and white spots such a big deal?" And it's because God is teaching them that this is what sin does to you. It excludes you from the camp. It removes you from fellowship not just from one another, but from God Himself. And so what He's saying is that He is indeed a God that can't be trifled with, that sin is serious.

Remember the whole nature of the Sinaiatic covenant. What was its purpose? Romans 5 and Galatians 3 both tell us that it was to tease out and make sin manifest. In other words, it was to show the serious nature of sin over against the holiness of God. Go ahead, Don.

Don: Yes. I was listening to "Renewing Your Mind" earlier this week. And R. C. was saying seven years ago that he went to a secular bookstore in the religion part, and he found this self-help stuff. But then he went to the Christian bookstore and found the same thing.

Jeff: Self-help stuff.

Don: Yes. And he said that it was amazing. He concluded from that that people just don't see their need for an atonement, their need for reconciliation with God.

Jeff: Yes. Well see, I'll tell you what. I was in the bookstore right after I became a Christian. I was talking to this lady that I knew. These people had known me since I was 12. So ten years later in the bookstore I was talking to this one lady. And I told her about my faith. I told her what I'd come to believe. And she looks at me and says to me, "I don't believe in any God who abuses His Son." And so the idea that I can work through this and that God would punish His Son on my behalf is often repugnant to people. But this is the idea, right? The idea is that sin is repugnant to God and this is the way of reconciliation through His Son. Yes?

Brave Man: You were talking about the heresy of saying that there are two gods.

Jeff: Marcion?

Brave Man: Yes. The Old Testament is the law and the New testament is Christ. I think the law is God saying, "Here's what you've done wrong and I'm angry about this." And then forgiveness comes through Christ.

Jeff: That's a good distinction. The only thing I would caution everyone in feeling that way is—

Brave Man: It's more of a question rather than—

Jeff: Oh, okay. Good. The only thing I would say is that what we want to be careful of when we talk about the law in the Old and the grace of the New,—and there is some

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substantiation to that in John’s prologue,--but one of the things that we need to take care of is this. We need to remember to talk about *the twofold grace of God*. Sig?

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff begins to draw.

Sig: Those markers weren’t a very good birthday present. (*Laughter*) That’s why we needed eight markers.

Don: What’s going on here?

Jeff: I’m drawing a circle, Don. So this circle represents *the duplex gratia Dei*, the twofold grace of God. When we talk about what we receive in Jesus Christ, when we talk about that we have a tendency to truncate the gospel.

And what do I mean by that? Well, when somebody asks us “What did Christ do for you?”, we say what? We say, “He died for me,” right? We say, “He died for me. And In His death I have the forgiveness of sins. That’s grace.”

And we might say that this is what we would call *justification*. We oftentimes say that justification means just as if I’d never sinned,--you know, that sort of use of the language that would communicate that Jesus died for me.

But when you think about it, that is only a partial gospel. That’s a truncated gospel.

Brave Man: Right.

Jeff: That’s not a full gospel, because when we talk about Jesus’ life and death for me, yes, we talk about His death for me. But what did His life do for me? Well, His life was the basis for the imputation of righteousness leading to my sanctification. In other words, there is a renovative aspect to what Christ has done for me.

There is no such thing as a Christian who says, “Jesus died for me, but I haven’t received the gift of sanctification yet.” That’s crazy, because in receiving the benefits of knowing Christ, Christ takes you from one kingdom and deposits you into another kingdom. In other words, He wholly separates you, at least in terms of status, from one kingdom, the kingdom of darkness, to the kingdom of the Son of His love.

And then we mature in that. We grow in that. We develop in that newfound role of being a child of His kingdom. But all of this is part and parcel of the twofold grace of God that we receive in Christ.

So here’s what I’m saying. So where does the law come into the New Testament? The law comes into the New Testament because I need to have some standard by which to live my life so as to be conformed to the image of Christ, right? In other words, Christ obeyed the law to be that perfect sacrifice on my behalf so that His righteousness might be imputed to me. But as I stand in Him justified I also need to live a life that is holy. And that life is guided by the law. Not that I earn anything before God, but my life is guided by the very law that He lived by, and the very law upon which that righteousness is imputed to me.

Ted: Let me ask you about these words, if I see this right. It almost seems like two parts. There’s Christ’s death that leads to justification, and Christ’s life which leads to imputed righteousness and sanctification. I see all of those coming under the umbrella of being united with Christ.

Jeff: Yes, I do too.

Ted: And when I’m clinging to Him I receive all of that.

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Jeff: Yes, that’s right. I totally agree with you.

Ted: And in many evangelical churches, and I even think about the church we’re going to now, it’s very heavy on justification. I hear it again and again. And I just don’t hear the rest of the story. It kind of seems like it’s very truncated. It’s not that it’s not true. And it seems that after a while, when you keep hearing about Jesus dying for your sins, I hate to say this, but I almost think it’s boring. I mean, I want to say, “I got it, I got it. Is that it?”

Jeff: Yes, I totally agree with you. In Christ there are forensic benefits; that’s justification. And there are renovative benefits. That’s the sanctifying aspect of it. You’re right.

Ted: It’s all one package.

Jeff: It’s all one. What I’m talking about is union with Christ. You’ve nailed it. It’s union with Christ. Okay? All right, good.

Let’s go to the lesson, verse 26. *“And His voice shook the earth then. But now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens.’”*

Now when you look at that, you look at that and you say, “Yet once more.” Is it the past or the future that he’s talking about? Well, He is talking about the past. He’s done something in the past to shape the foundations of things. But He’s going to do something in the future. So there’s a learning from the past involved here that I want you to catch.

Now you have to go to Haggai the prophet in order to grab this. I want you to go there. I’ll try to put some of the more salient quotes down for you. But I want you to go to Haggai the prophet. And if you’re looking for Haggai, go back to the Old Testament. I think you’ll head backward three books after you get to that middle page in the Bible.

Now what we notice is that we’re going to spend some time in chapters 1 and 2. But I’m going to start with 2 just to get your bearings here. In chapter 2 of Haggai one of the things that we notice is that this oracle, this second oracle that Haggai is going to give from the Lord, is on the seventh month and the 21st day, likely of 520 B.C.

Now I want you to think about this. When you think about the time line,--and you guys know this, just to reiterate,--if this is 0, where Christ shows up, then the numbers get smaller. And then when you get to 0 they get larger so everything converges upon Christ.

So what’s the context of this 520 date? Well, let me give it to you. You remember in about 900 that the North and the South of Israel split. Remember, this is the Solomon story. Solomon takes power. And Solomon makes the people work. And Jeroboam comes to Rehoboam and says, “Hey look, can you lighten up a little bit, because your dad was pretty hard on us?”

And Rehoboam says, “You thought my dad was hard on you. Wait till you get a load of me!”

And Jeroboam takes the ten northern tribes and splits from the two southern tribes, Judah and Benjamin.

Now that’s the North and the South rupture. The North goes into captivity under the Assyrians in 722, okay. Then in 586 the South goes into captivity under the Babylonians. And then after they’ve been in captivity about 70 years, they get released. And you read

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about the release under Ezra and Nehemiah. They return to the land, okay? Nehemiah rebuilds the wall. There's a rebuilding of the temple under Ezra, and so there's this return.

We are in the midst of the return. We are in the midst of this particular period, about 520, okay? They're in the midst of the return. You have to keep that in mind.

Now think about this. You open up to Haggai chapter 1. In Haggai chapter 1 God says, “Hey, the temple's not rebuilt!”

And everybody goes, “Oh, we just didn't have time; it's been tough. You know, we haven't had a chance to get to it.”

And God says to them in his opening oracle, “Well that's kind of funny, because when I look at your houses, they look pretty snazzy.” (*Laughter*) “It looks like you've had plenty of time to rebuild your houses, but no time to rebuild the temple.” You know, that sort of thing, right? That's what's there.

And God says to them, “Let Me tell you what I think of that. Guess who's going to have no crops this year.” (*Laughter*) Okay, so that's kind of the way He treats it, right? So everybody gets a little motivated to rebuild the temple, right? (*Laughter*)

So when you get to Haggai 2, the temple has been rebuilt. There has been some motivation to complete the project. Now go to Haggai chapter 2 and we're going to look at a couple of verses. So if you're in Haggai hold your place. And then go back to Ezra. And if you don't want to go back to Ezra you can just listen,

I want us to look at Ezra chapter 3. In Ezra chapter 3 you have something from about the same time period as Haggai chapter 2. I'm going to read the first six verses of Ezra chapter 3. All right, listen to this. Don, do you have it?

Don: No, I don't.

Jeff: Okay. “*When the seventh month came,*” (there's the seventh month, okay?) “*When the seventh month came and the children of Israel were in the towns, the people gathered as one man to Jerusalem. Then arose Jeshua the son of Jozadak with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel with his kinsmen. And they built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. They set the altar in its place, for fear was on them because of the peoples of the land. And they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD burnt offerings, morning and evening. And they kept the Feast of Booths as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number according to the rule, as each day required. And after that the regular burnt offering, the offerings at the New Moon and at the appointed feasts of the LORD, and the offerings of everyone who made a freewill offering to the LORD, from the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid. So they gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and the food and drink and oil from the Sidonians and Tyrians, and to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the Sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had held from Cyrus king of Persia.*”

Now you go to Haggai. And notice the breakdown of the seventh month. In the seventh month on day one you would have had the Feast of Trumpets. On day ten you would have had the Day of Atonement. And then on days 15-22 which are mentioned in Ezra, you would have had the Feast of Tabernacles.

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Okay, now where are we? We’re on day 21. They are in the midst of celebrating the feast that was commemorating the departure from Egypt. That’s where they are in the midst of this celebration.

Now here they are. Things are not completed. But they’re able to offer sacrifices and so on. The Lord has warned them 21 days ago that they needed to be about this work. And they are now motivated. But now that they stand there and look at this place which is rudimentarily done, I mean that in a rudimentary way there’s some completion to it; the walls are up, the temple structure is there.

They’re looking at it and this is what’s asked. *“Who is left among you who saw the temple in its former glory?”* *“And how do you see it now?”*

Now in Ezra 3:10-13 it’s interesting. I should have kept my place there. But again, if you go back to Ezra 3:10-13, check this out. It’s about the same time. *“And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, and the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites and the sons of Asaph with cymbals to praise the LORD according to the directions of David king of Israel, and they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, for He is good, and His steadfast love endures forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers’ houses of old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people’s weeping. For the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.”*

Now here you have it in Haggai. He says, *“Who remembers the former house and all of its glory?”* And he asks this because in the midst of this we find both weeping and joy, because there are people who remember the former days with all of its glory. And we find this mixed reaction in this group.

Now I want you to think about this. These exiles have basically returned to rubble and desolation. They’ve not been motivated to rebuild the temple; now they are. The temple foundation is laid. The altars are built. They can begin to start worshiping. And now they’re singing and they’re praising. And some are weeping and wailing because they’re longing for the former days.

Think about how this applies to the Hebrew Christians to whom this man is writing. They’re in a house church. This is what they’re in. And to them it’s like being surrounded by rubble. They’re not in Herod’s temple. They’re not able to watch the beauty. Even though Herod’s temple wasn’t completed, it’s still beautiful, just like the temple of old in all of its glory.

But for them, they’re in a living room. And the guy standing in front of them is in a plain toga. And he’s reading from a script or a scroll. And there’s no beautiful altar surrounding them. There’s no incense being offered. Can you imagine? They’re saying, *“Where is the glory of former days?”*

That’s the comparison and the parallel that the Preacher is trying to grab hold of and bring to the fore as he talks to them about what’s going on in this quote from Haggai.

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He’s trying to make the comparison that you’re not the only one having to be or wishing for former glory, as they understood it.

But here’s the thing. Let’s go a little further in our thinking and developing about this. So go back to Haggai. And in Haggai chapter 2 one of the things that God says to them is this. In Haggai chapter 2 he says, “Now look, I want to tell you something.”

Now in order to grab this you have to get what happened at the Exodus. Do you remember? At the Exodus they plunder the Egyptians. And they get their gold and all of the linens. And when they get out into the wilderness, do you remember what they do with them? They build the tabernacle! They plunder the Egyptians in order to build the glorious tabernacle in which they worshiped.

Now in Haggai chapter 2 all these people are standing around this foundation of the temple. And there are people weeping and there are people shouting with joy. And God says to them in this oracle that “I will shake the nations again.”

And what would that have brought to the mind of these people? It would have brought to mind the idea that if we plundered the Egyptians and were able to build this beautiful tabernacle, then if we plunder the nations, think about how beautiful this particular structure will be! That’s the comparison He’s trying to make when He says that He’s going to shake the nations in Haggai 12.

Now think about this. This is what he says. This is what our author says. Our author says, “You need to think about it like this. God is going to shake the heavens and the earth. And you need to keep your eyes not on the things that are seen, because the things that are seen are going to pass away. The temple structure that you find so beautiful is going to pass away.” But the Lord is shaking the nations again. And the temple structure that is being built now is not the gold of the nations, but is the very nations themselves.

This is the great assembly that he talked about in the previous section of verses, this great assembly that gives praise to God. Now all of a sudden we see the shift. It’s not about the temple. It’s about the people of Christ who are the temple and who make up the temple of God, and who are so beautifully constructed in Christ. That’s the point of comparison here. Hold on just a second.

When you see that, then you understand what a life lived by faith is. Why? Because a life lived by faith sees the unseen.

And so you build a boat in the middle of a field, right? You dwell in a land as a stranger, thinking that it’s your land. And you give up the riches of Egypt. And then what? You stand in a plain room with a plain preacher who’s preaching a very plain gospel. And you understand that you are the temple of God, beautiful and glorious. That’s the idea.

Brave Man: So the lesson here is not to go back.

Jeff: Well, for them it was not to look back. That’s right.

Brave Man: The lesson here for them is not to fall back.

Jeff: That’s right.

Brave Man: But to look forward because of Christ. God is doing something new.

Jeff: That’s right. Go ahead.

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Ted: We’re not simply to look forward, but to look to Christ, because we could look forward to building even a greater seen temple.

Jeff: Yes. I mean, the way to get off track on this is to use this as sort of a self-help. Somebody said this earlier. The way to get off track is to use this as self-help. Don’t look back to your past disappointments. Look ahead to the future that God has for you. And what Ted is reminding us is no. This is saying to us, don’t look back to shadows and types that could never bring fullness and forgiveness of sin. Look to Christ in whom you have a new life which includes the forgiveness of sins. And live out of that new life. That’s what you’re saying, right? And that’s the idea of a new beginning, this new start. This is the foundation that won’t be shaken. This is the temple that will never be destroyed. That’s the idea. Okay?

I realize that we’re running short on time. Let me just go through this last point fairly quickly. It’s because of that that we need to have eyes of faith to be grateful to receive this new kingdom. Look, think about it. If you are sitting there in this living room with a few other people, and you’re wishing that you were in the temple where it’s beautiful and glorious, and you have some protection from the Romans, if that’s what you’re wishing, then you’re not very grateful for what God has done, this new thing that He’s done. And this is what he’s saying. *Eyes of faith make grateful hearts.*

The ground of thanksgiving is to distinguish between Sinai and Zion, which is what we talked about the last time. I’m not going to go back to that today.

But then he says this. He says that if you have eyes of faith, offer acceptable worship to God. He says, look. Where does the rubber meet the road here? I’ll tell you where the rubber meets the road. The rubber meets the road because if you are going back to Judaism and to all the accouterments of Judaism, that is not acceptable worship! And what he’s saying is that acceptable worship is what you find in John 4:24.

Transcriber’s Note: John 4:24, ESV. *“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”*

Jeff: Worship in spirit and in truth. Now you know, that needs to be fleshed out a bit. But you get the idea. The idea is that acceptable worship is not the types and shadows of the past. Acceptable worship is in the fulfillment that Christ brings. Again, it’s about Christ.

Okay. And then this is really important because this not only includes the manner of praise. But actually what comes to the forefront is not the manner of praise, but what comes to the forefront is the attitude you have, because here’s the deal. You can be in the living room worshipping, and not a part of the Old with all of its frills and whistles and bells. But if your attitude is not in the living room, grateful for the new kingdom and what God has done, well then there’s another dimension that you need to work on.

Now look. I understand that sometimes it’s all we can do just to get into the living room, right? You know what I mean, men? Sometimes it’s like that my feet are going in the direction that they ought to go. And my eyes are going in the direction that they ought to go. But my mind, my heart, my attitude is not in that direction. I’m struggling to move my feet forward. But moving my feet forward is better than not moving my feet forward. You get the idea.

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So what I’m saying is that there’s always something going on. And then *the eyes of faith see who God is*. This is important because it brings us back around to what we started with the last time we were together. Who is the God who is? And this text tells us at the end not that God is peace, love and happiness. He’s nothing like the God of Sinai. He’s not like a fearful God. God is a kinder, gentler God.

No! What does it say? It says, “*God is a consuming fire.*” He’s the same God!

And here’s the point that he’s making. The point he’s making is, isn’t it so delicious and precious and wonderful to have Christ to have saved us from this consuming fire? You see, that’s his point. His point is always to fix our eyes on Christ who is the culmination of what He’s been doing. That’s what the Old led to. So don’t go back to the Old, because the Old can’t save you fully and finally from the consuming fire. The Old only took you to the One who can save you from the consuming fire, which is God, which is in Christ. Okay?

All right, so that’s it. Seeing no questions, why don’t we pray? Then we’ll dismiss.

Father, thanks for this day, for our time together. Bless us, Lord, especially as we’ll see many family members this weekend. We ask that You’ll make those fruitful visits. We pray that we’ll be good gospel stewards in the midst of our interactions. Father, help us with studying this text, to remember that You’ve done something great. You’ve shaken the earth. You’ve shaken the nations and You’ve brought them to the temple to be part of the temple, to be part of that living structure that is Your body. Thank You, Father, for doing that, for including us in it, for making Your name glorious. We pray these things in Your name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.