

Week 1: Understanding God’s Judgment and Trusting His Leadership

I. WHY IS THIS HAPPENING

- A. When difficulty comes, most of us ask, “Why is this negative thing happening?”
- B. There are four “sources” behind the negative event:
 - 1. God shaking the nations
 - 2. Satan’s rage
 - 3. Mankind’s sin
 - 4. Creation’s groan
- C. While people are willing to agree with Satan’s rage, creation’s groan, and man’s sin, most struggle to accept God’s shaking the nations.

II. ONE OF GOD’S PRIMARY GOALS IS THE HARVEST (HAGGAI 2:7)

- A. The Lord promised to shake the nations in five ways in the end times.
7“...I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations [Jesus]...” says the LORD of hosts. (Hag. 2:7)
 - 1. The sky
 - 2. The earth
 - 3. The sea
 - 4. The dry land
 - 5. **All** the nations
- B. The Desire of all nations: The Lord’s shaking of the nations will result in multitudes coming to Christ, who is referred to here as “The Desire of all nations” (Hag. 2:7). Many in the nations will come to see Jesus as “desirable” for God will reveal Him as so. God will lead unbelievers on a journey through which Jesus, who was once undesirable, will become their Desire.
 - 1. Currently, the “God who shakes us” is undesirable to many in the Church as well. Rather than wrestle to reconcile His judgment with His love, they dismiss the “God who shakes us.”
 - 2. They don’t understand how a God of love would allow something to affect our temporal blessings negatively.
 - 3. God will surprise the Church by demonstrating just how *Desirable* Jesus is.
- C. God shakes what can be shaken so that we will focus on the unshakeable.
*26whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” 27Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates **the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.** (Heb. 12:26-17)*

III. HABAKKUK’S DILEMMA

- A. Habakkuk began complaining that God’s people continued with unrighteous acts, despite the revival that had occurred under Josiah (Hab. 1).
 - 1. God’s response: He will send the Babylonian army to discipline them.
 - 2. Habakkuk’s response: They are far more evil! How could You do that, God?
 - 3. God patiently led Habakkuk to understand how His severe mercy is an act of His great love.
 - 4. By the end of the book, Habakkuk is singing of the wisdom of God’s ways (Hab. 3).
- B. In Revelation 15:3-4, we see the saints singing of the wisdom of God’s leadership and agreeing with His end-time judgments that were to be released in Revelation 16.
 - 1. That is, the end of the process is the global unity of the Church delighting in God’s ways and agreeing with His judgments, despite the horrible judgments to come in Revelation 16.
 - 2. This shift in the Church is a model and an encouragement for the nations so that they may see the wisdom and love of God in what they are enduring.

IV. THE DILEMMA IN THE CHURCH

- A. Right now the Church does not, as a whole, understand Jesus as a judge. Jesus will first bring the Church into delighting in Him, before the nations do, and into delighting in who He is in **full**, not just appreciating what we want Him to be.
- B. God will give understanding of His judgments and the Church will learn from them (Isa. 26:9).
⁹With my soul I have desired You in the night. Yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early, for when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9)
- C. The Church will no longer dismiss God’s judgments but will look at them through the lens of the Holy Spirit’s view—the lens of love—not through the lens of secular culture (Jer. 30:24).
²⁴The fierce anger of the LORD will not return [to Him] until He has done it and until He has performed the intents of His heart. In the latter days you will consider it. (Jer. 30:24)
- D. Some of God’s prophets were deeply troubled when seeing God’s judgments. It is reasonable to begin overwhelmed, yet we will end up in earnestly desiring the Lord.
 - 1. Daniel became physically ill when he was shown the Lord’s end-time judgments. Habakkuk was overwhelmed by God’s plan to judge them via a nation more evil than they.
 - 2. After seeing God’s end-time plan, with all the judgment in it, John said, “Even so, come” (Rev. 22:20).
- E. We must become teachable and be willing for God’s Word to define truth to us (1 Cor. 3:18).
¹⁸Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. (1 Cor. 3:18)