

When Everything's Unwrapped, Will You Have What Really Lasts?

Simeon was known to be a righteous and devout man, but many had undoubtedly misunderstood his pious lifestyle. He always seemed to be waiting for something, but no one knew exactly what it was.

Lately, his uneasy fidgeting had made others uncomfortable. How many times had his well-meaning friends exhorted him, "Calm down, Simeon!"?

But he couldn't calm down. His heart had been stirred in unspeakable ways when the rabbi had read the words of the prophet Haggai.

"For thus says the Lord of Hosts: Once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and earth, the sea and dry land. And I will shake all the nations, and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of Hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is Mine, says the Lord of Hosts. The glory of this latter house will be greater than the former, says the Lord of Hosts. And in this place I will give peace, says the Lord of Hosts" (Hag. 2:6-9).

In a similar way, everyone had a hard time relating to poor Anna. "How long has that old lady been here in the temple?" they would ask. "I heard someone say she's been here for 60 years!"

To some it seemed like such a waste, but a few others were provoked by her remarkable focus in prayer, fasting and worship. And there were others—those who, like Anna, had an unexplainable longing that had been getting inexplicably

stronger.

One day they were all magnetically drawn to the temple, and it was to be a day unlike all the other days. Invisible invitations brought them together for a holy convocation.

The air was suddenly electric, and Simeon could feel it. Anna's worship reached a surprising crescendo. Eyes of a select few began to dart around the courts. Haggai's words began to echo in their minds. Everyone's desire was about to be brought into Zerubbabel's temple just like it had been promised.

Just then a normal-looking man named Joseph walked in carrying two pigeons. Behind him was a young woman carrying an infant to his dedication. Any other time they might have walked across the courtyard unnoticed, but not that day. That day eyes were fixed on them and the precious cargo they carried.

Simeon and Anna converged on the unsuspecting couple, and in a moment their lives of waiting made sense. Promises had become reality. Desires were fulfilled.

Regarding Haggai 2:7, Charles Spurgeon commented:

*"Oh! If the world could gather up all her right desire; if she could condense in one cry all her wild wishes; if all true lovers of mankind could condense their theories and extract the true wine of wisdom from them; it would just come to this, **we want an Incarnate God**, and you have got the Incarnate God! Oh! nations, but ye know it not! Ye, in the dark, are groping after him, and know not that he is there"* (emphasis added).

Can you believe with me today that Jesus Christ is, in fact, what the nations of the earth truly desire—*who* they truly desire? Is He the one *you* truly desire?

As we celebrate Christmas and the birth of our incarnate God,

let's look to Jesus as the source of shaking that brings clarity to our desires. We allow too many things to clutter our path to Him. Our affections are spread too thin on lesser things.

Would you join with me as we enter into the New Year, and let's make a sacred dedication of our lives. Let's invite Jesus to shake us all in order to remove the things that clutter our way to him. He wants to remove the obstacles that keep us from realizing now he is actually the One we desire.

"At that time His voice shook the earth, but now He has given us a promise, saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also heaven.' And this statement, 'Yet once more,' signifies the removal of those things that can be shaken, things that are created, so that only those things that cannot be shaken will remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us be gracious, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:26-29).

Not long from now Jesus Christ will return and all eyes will see Him. Once and for all, He will be revealed as the ultimate fulfillment of global desire—regardless of culture or creed.

From the same place Simeon and Anna once witnessed His humble entrance into the world, He will bring peace to the nations. Those who realize this now have the great privilege of taking this message to the nations in order to spread the fires of desire.

A prayer of personal dedication:

"Lord Jesus, I invite You to shake what needs to be shaken in me for this New Year. Let your consuming fire of desire for me ignite my desire for You in return. I want to know and say with confidence that You are truly the desire of the nations.

"Lord, help me to grow in this confidence out of a place of

personal knowledge that You are the fairest among ten thousand. There is no other name given to men by which we must be saved. There is no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth who is worthy.

“You alone, Jesus, are my desire. Amen.”

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