

The Supereminence of Christ Above Moses

The Supereminence of Christ Above Moses: or Of The More Excellent Glory and Power Which Accompanies His Promulgation of the Gospel, than did Accompany the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.'

Heb. 12:25-29

'According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. 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. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.'

Haggai 2:5-9

The apostle is upon a comparison (or rather, that there is no comparison) between Christ, as giving forth the word on Mount Sion, and Moses upon Mount Sinai. This Moses, in delivering his law, he reckoneth of but as a man on earth; and so infers from thence (to greaten Christ), 'If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaks from heaven.' The vast disproportion between these two teachers, he argues from that infinite distance that is between the situation of their seats and places they spake from; Moses's chair (as Christ terms it) was placed on earth, so low, at the footstool; but Christ hath his chair in heaven, as was said of old of him, so high above the others as are the highest heavens. Neither let this so great lowering Moses and his law, unto Christ and his gospel, offend you, O ye Jews, as too bold or contemptuous. For Paul had your own John Baptist to bear him out, who when in like manner he would compare himself with Christ, and his doctrine with his own (to the end to exalt both it and him), he casts himself, and the highest point he could reach to, as low as earth: John iii. 81, 82, 'He that is of the earth is earthly, and he speaks of the earth.' And such a teacher I acknowledge myself to be, says he, when set with him 'that cometh from heaven;' and such also my doctrine is in comparison of his, who 'speaketh what he heard and seen,' namely, in heaven, from whence he comes. What John thus speaks of himself, Paul applies to Moses. And John in his ministry was greater than Moses and all the prophets, put all into the same scale together with him, Mat. xi. 11 and 18.

The apostle Paul doth urge us farther to consider those infinitely surpassing and more glorious effects of power and majesty, which do issue from the voice of him that speaks from heaven in the gospel, and accompanies the delivery of it, as a testimony of the glory of the matter uttered in it; which the more lively to represent, he compareth them with those former effects which accompanied the delivery of the law when it was given by Moses 'Whose voice then shook the earth,' says he, 'but his voice now shall shake both earth and heavens.'

From which advance he thirdly raiseth another mount yet higher, namely a consideration of that super-excelling glory of his kingdom, which his gospel uttered, by him brought to light, and gave believers the right and assurance of; all these effects accompanying both law and gospel, being but works and effects of an inferior sort, and lower make and production: things but made, in comparison of the things of his kingdom, which Christ should bring in.

Now by these shakings, &c., the apostle meaneth and intendeth those new, strange, and (in comparison to those under the times of the law) unparalleled changes, alterations, and abolitions of things which were begun in his time and view, to be made in this world, and are to go they are to be consummated at the latter day. And these are the effects and concomitants of this word, the gospel, and of his voice that dictates it. All which removals should be but the preludiums and fore-running preparations unto that kingdom of his, 'which cannot be shaken;' which all shall issue and determine in, as infinitely more glorious than all thing we now see or know, by how much all these are but made to be pulled own, and then removed, as the rubbish that lies in the way to that kingdom to be erected: 'But we have a kingdom,' the gospel speak 'which cannot be shaken;' which therefore let us firmly expect, and adhere unto, and 'serve God acceptably,' in the expectation of it, in the midst of all these shakings. This for the coherence, and as an outside show of the meaning of the words, hung forth at the entrance, inviting you to the within. Let us now enter and view each particular more thoroughly and exactly.

The words of my text, in ver. 26 and 27 (though I have read the rest afore and after), do fix upon this latter point, namely, the vast different effects and demonstration of power, by all sorts of alterations in heaven and earth, that shall accompany the coming and kingdom of Christ, all along the times of the gospel, in comparison of those that attended upon giving of the law of Moses. And this I have also fixed on to be my present subject.

The particulars to explain that difference are two.

I. The difference of those effects themselves when compared.

II. The allegation of the prophecy in Haggai, for the proof of that comparison, and likewise the pertinency of that allegation. Which two, being by way of general premise despatched, I shall more closely grasp those which are the greatest difficulties in the text, in their own place.

I. The difference of those effects themselves compared.

1. The first part of the comparison are the prodigies that fell out at the birth and bringing forth of the law, the shaking of the earth, &c. 'Whose voice then shook the earth,' says the text out of the 19th Exod. 18. 'The mountain quaked greatly,' and the sights in the air upon the mount were so terrible and the voice then heard so dreadful, that they could not endure it (ver. 19, 21). But yet, so as the force and efficacy of all these reached no higher or further than the earth and air, which signified the lowness and earthliness of the frame and form of worship given, and also to be of that sort, which one day, as the earth was then, should be in the like manner

itself shaken, as the apostle here unfolds the mystery of it.

And withal (to that end to greaten Christ, and heighten the comparison of his gospel effects with these the more) he hints us to consider that it was even our Christ which then gave the law, and that it was his voice, though hiddenly and concealedly, the power whereof shook the earth; 'Whose voice,' saith my text, 'then shook the earth' for though angels are said to have given the law, it being termed, Heb. ii. 1, 'The word spoken by angels,' yet the Lord God (which was Christ) stood hid under those angels; so expressly, Exod. xx. 21, 'You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.' And though Moses, as a mediator, is said to have given it visibly forth., Gal. iii. 19, compared with Deut. v. 5, yet you may see what a poor slight mediator he was by his carriage in it, and to have been but a cypher, or shadow of our Christ, whose voice then and now speaks, and made him to tremble. You may read how Moses stood by quaking and trembling, whilst the law was uttering, like a frail sorry man of earth (as he was), for no sooner did he begin to feel all things shaking under him, but he cries out, as ver. 21, 'I exceedingly fear and quake.' He shewed what a man he was, and how constituted, but of the same matter the mountain itself (that was the first shaker) was of, earth and dust; which our apostle allegeth to show his law, in comparison of this gospel, to be like unto him, earthy, and ordained to be shaken.

Corollary. And this, as it is the clearest scripture in the New Testament, that it was Christ that gave the law, so it is as evident a proof that he is God, whose voice it was that spake those words, and said, 'I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt have no other gods but me;' which voice then shook the earth, in testimony thereof at the uttering of them. This is the first part of this comparison.

2. The second part is a comparative inference, how far greater and more surpassing outward effects, and signs and tokens of power and glory, must needs be ordained to accompany the coming of Christ himself, and the dispensation of the gospel from him, inferred from this, that his voice then shook the earth, &c.; wherein two things are to be considered,

(1.) The surpassing excellency of the effects themselves.

(2.) The ground and rationality of the apostle's inference, when from a comparison made with the other, he argues and infers the excellency of those effects themselves under the gospel.

(1.) For the super-exceeding of the effects themselves under the gospel. If he shook the earth then, he will shake heaven now; that is, as Christ in his own case speaks, if you wonder at this, you shall see greater wonders than these. 'The Father loveth the Son,' and to shew us that he is the Son himself, 'He will shew him greater works, that you may yet marvel.' Thus here, if he then shook earth, he will now shake both earth and heavens too.

Which phrase, to open it first in general, is a proverbial speech, to express how far higher and greater things he will do even by so much higher as the heavens are above the earth; that look, as it would in all men's apprehensions to be a demonstration of greater power for one to shake the pillars of heaven, and make the stars quiver, the sun to tremble, in comparison of shaking houses and glass windows on earth, which, we see, great noises, as of thunder-claps, and great ordnances are wont to do; so in this.

[2] As in the object shaken this riseth higher, even to the shaking heavens, so in the issue of the shaking either the one or the other. For whereas then he did but shake, he will now not only shake but remove: and then he did but shake the earth, and in the earth that mountain the Law was given upon, which yet stands where it did; under the gospel he not only shake but remove, not the earth only, which he shook but in part afore, but even the heavens, which he then left

untouched. But now he shakes, yea, and he means to remove, ver. 27. Thus 'this word once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as things made, on purpose to give demonstration of his power in their removal, and withal that super-excelling glory of that kingdom, to which these things are made to give way unto; and observe it (for it must be our guide, and so to bring us to the fullness of Paul and Haggai's meaning, that the apostle puts the emphasis upon even this), that he shakes so as to remove. And this he allegeth as Haggai's scope.

(2.) For the ground or rational part of this inference, namely, why, upon giving the gospel, these effects should rise so much higher, the account stands thus,

[1] If God (whom here the apostle affirms Christ to be) will anew come down into the world a second time, he will surely make his discovery therein exceed the former; it is his manner so to do, especially if the first be but a shadow or type of the same person in lesser discoveries (as Moses was in this of Christ's), and in that respect but as the earth; then the second or next succeeding, whatever it be, will rise as high as heaven in comparison of the former. Now Moses, as a man on earth, gave forth his dispensation but Christ as the Lord from heaven; therefore his must accordingly in its proportion exceed. And his argument runs thus, It was Christ's own voice which then did shake the earth when he gave the law. Now if being then hid (himself concealed under the administration of angels, therefore, Acts vii. 30 - 82, in his speaking to Moses, he is sometimes termed an angel, sometimes the Lord), and also stood disguised under Moses receiving the law, as his type, did yet own and second that dispensation, so far as shake the earth, &c., in testimony of that underhand and remote presence of his; what effects will his voice have, when he comes personally to appear, and professedly as Son of God to dwell in man's nature person united to himself, and therein to deliver a new doctrine (namely, the gospel); especially now, that is, after his having been on earth, and there had himself conversed with men, but now is ascended again to heaven, and from thence speaks and rules, who, in his person, was 'the Lord from heaven,' 1 Cor. xv., and in heaven whilst on earth, and so Lord of both earth and heaven, and hath received all power both in earth and heaven. To give full proof of all these things, he will therefore surely shake both earth and heaven, and shew he is able to shake and remove both. So much for the inference and ground of the apostle's arguing,, as elsewhere be doth the like from Adam to Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 45, 46, by way of a super-excelling comparison, which is his way of arguing here.

II. For the allegation out of Haggai, and the pertinency of it, to this his scope, which is the next and great thing to be insisted on, I observe that the apostle's custom in this epistle (he writing to Jews) is to assert nothing but what he brings proof for out of the Old Testament (as all along appears), he writing to such, who (as Peter speaks) 'gave heed to that sure word of prophecy of old;' and thus he here quotes Haggai ii. 6, 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."

1. The prophecy is evidently of Christ, his person and coming, whom he entitleth 'the Desire of all nations,' according to other scriptures, as also what in himself he is, and should be unto all believers. Jacob had before, by the like circumlocution, described him to be that person, to whom 'the gathering of the people should be.' The Septuagint translates it 'the Expectation of the people,' be being the centre of all their desires, and dearest affection, whom kings and prophets desire to see, Luke x. 24, or as Isa. xi. 10, To him shall the Gentiles seek;' or as Christ out of Isaiah of himself, 'In his name shall the Gentiles trust ;' - it is the periphrasis of the Messiah. Thus multitudes of places, 'the land of desire,' speaking of Canaan, Zech. vii. 14, is put for a land most pleasant, and to every one the object of desire. Thus things or persons lovely are

termed desirable, or things of desire, everywhere in the prophets; and a person most dear, as a wife, is called by Cicero, desiderium meum, my desire, even as we now say, 'My love,' and as Christ is thus by Haggai enstiled the Desire of all nations, and to come as such; in like manner Malachi (in a correspondency to this prophecy) terms him 'the Lord, and messenger of the covenant, whom ye' (speaking to the Jews) 'seek and delight in,' Mal. 1. That which is our happiness or chiefest good is the object of desire when waited for, of delight when enjoyed; and such is Christ both to Jew and Gentile, coming to be Lord of both. And the harmony between the prophecy of Malachi and Haggai is the more full, because both prophesy, whilst they speak these things of his coming, and both prophesy of his filling that temple, then built, with glory.

Now, 2. The pertinency of the apostle's singling out this scripture thus, evidently meant of Christ, is very observable; for it not only serves to prove the thing itself he would assert, namely, the shaking of both earth and heaven, when this Messiah should come; but further, it ratifies also the foundation of his very comparison here made, namely, that if God did so great wonders at the giving the law by Moses, that he will do greater when the Messiah promised should come. To this purpose observe how, in the words just before, the prophet pointeth them to what God had done in Moses this time for the people, as the ground and foundation of inference, that he would now again, upon the approaching times of the Messiah; do greater. Read ver. 5, 6, 7, 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. 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. As if he should have said, you know how greatly then for you I shook the earth. I shook Egypt afore I gave the law, I shook the earth at the the law, and I shook all, and all the nations round about you in casting them forth for you, after I had given it. Now, once more, I will a second time begin, and go on to do greater things, and shake heavens also, and and dry land, and all nations; and shaking, remove all in them that is.

Now the difficulties that are met with in this text, by them that travelled through it, are eminently two.

1. Concerning the time which this prophecy and promise should concern, 'Now he hath promised;' or when it is this promise either was, is to be performed, and in what centre of time we may find Haggai his intention, and Paul's application hereof in this epistle to this time, 'Now, to meet and agree.

2. The second is the explication of these heavens and earth, and shaking and removing of them; what these import.

1. Now for the first. There is no controversy as to the designment of this time in the general, viz., that it being opposed to the time of giving the law, therefore it should note out some time under the gospel; for then is clearly opposed to now, Whose voice then shook the earth; but now hath promised,' &c. So that some part or piece of gospel time, in opposition to the time of the law, should be designed, is acknowledged by all hands. But the difficulty is, whether this now of the performance of promise was only the time of the first giving forth the gospel (as the then shook the earth was at or upon the first giving the law); and so to design that time only, when Christ was on earth, and his apostles had begun to preach the gospel. And this so as with that time all this should end and determine, and with it the commission of Haggai's prophecy as extending to no further time.

This some assert, observing, 1st, Haggai to speak evidently of Christ's first coming, and of the

signs and prodigies which were found to accompany his being on earth, in shaking heaven and earth, &c., of which hereafter. And, 2ndly, they observe the great change and shaking that fell out there upon in the world, in giving forth the gospel first by Christ, then succeeded by the apostles, whereby the Gentile nations were then converted, and Christ, the Desire of all nations, even the utmost blessing their hearts to the utmost enlarged could desire, revealed to them, and so come amongst them. And, 3dly, they observe that among the Jews, to whom Haggai directed his prophecy, there was a shaking and removal of that former frame of worship, &c. (or, as Paul to the Colossians expresseth it, 'a blotting out the handwriting and nailing it to his cross, and so taking it out of way'), set up by the law of Moses; and instead thereof, that eternal kingdom, the kingdom of heaven (as the gospel, and the doctrine, worship promises of it are called) set up once for all. After which God will bring in no new nor further doctrine or worship. Hence therefore, it is judged by many, that the time of Haggai's prophecy doth end and determine with this, in a full and complete accomplishment; as also Paul's scope his intent here being (as they judge) in his application hereof (he writing to the Jews about the change of the Jewish worship, &c., which he had inculcated all along in this epistle) to put a conclusion to this his argument, which been the subject of his epistle, and to that end allegeth, last of all, this prophecy of Haggai's, as foretelling this change which they had seen Christ's coming, as no other than what was foretold by him should come to pass upon Christ's coming (who now spake to them from heaven, as this alteration clearly evidenced), viz., a new doctrine; unto whom therefore, and his doctrine, he most vehemently now at last exhorts them to attend.

Others observing (as they judge) Paul to step over the mention of Christ's coming, and to carry the minds of those he wrote to unto other shakings and removals of heaven and earth yet to come; they on the opposite side have restrained Paul's scope and intention to the change which is yet to be made upon the second coming of Christ, the reasons for which I shall give anon. But then how to reconcile Paul and Haggai together is still the difficulty. For if Paul carries it to the second coming, and yet Haggai's prophecy doth expressly intend the first coming; or if Haggai intends the first, how can Paul (who cited scriptures pertinently, and so as might convince the Jews he wrote to) apply it to the second especially, as a promise made in Haggai yet to be fulfilled?

I shall endeavour, as I am able, to search and give forth the full intent and scope both of Paul and Haggai in their utmost latitude, and try if all these may not justly be reconciled by an amplitude of interpretation of either. I shall begin with Paul's scope first, and then with Haggai's, and so proceed to a reconciliation of them.

1. For Paul's mind herein, I shall proceed by degrees:

As, 1. That his now here takes not in the time of Christ's being in the flesh only, but the age of the apostles, the present time he spake this in, which is clear. For his now refers to that now of Christ's speaking from heaven, and therefore speaks of him as being ascended to heaven, and from thence now speaking to us on earth; and it was now some years from his ascension when he wrote this epistle. He was not only come (as Haggai speaks), but gone again into heaven; and he says not, 'Refuse not him that hath spoken from heaven,' in respect that he being a man from heaven when on earth, first gave the gospel; but as one that now continues to speak from thence.

Then, 2nd, the just reason of this will carry Paul's scope, not only to be fixed to that present now or age, but all along to the end of the world. For, 1st, by and for the same reason alleged, that he did shake the earth and the heavens then in Paul's time, by and for the same reason he must be acknowledged to continue to do it in all ages after. Now the reason he attributes it unto then was that he was then speaking from heaven; and so his voice then had this effect of shaking heaven and earth. Therefore by the same reason, whilst from heaven he shall thus speak to men,

he will continue to shake both earth and heaven during all that time. His voice, while he speaks from heaven, will shake earth and heaven, as even that parallel of his shaking the earth when he gave the law, serves also to persuade. For look, as whilst the law was a-speaking by the ministry of angels, he is said to speak from heaven, Exod. xx. 22, and all that while his voice continued to shake the earth; so here, whilst the gospel is dispensed by the ministry of apostles and ministers to succeed them, he is all that 'while said to speak from heaven as well as at first, and during that time he, for a sign and token of the power of it, continues more or less to shake earth and heaven. And therefore, as he hath not ceased to speak, - nor doth to this day, so, nor hath he ceased this shaking. And therefore, secondly, the apostle speaks in the language of the present time, I shake. That whereas 'of his shaking the earth at his giving the law he speaks in the time past, 'whose voice then shook the earth;' and whereas also the prophet Haggai, as prophesying of it, hath said, 'I will shake, which interpreters have observed, but not considered enough for the purport of it; yet of this he speaks in the time being, I shake, I am a-doing it now, when this was writing, and in that age and I still shake whilst I speak. As therefore he then was, and still a-speaking from heaven; and it is the Messiah's voice we hear; so as did then, be also doth still shake, and will do to the end of the world, when will come himself again, and by his own immediate voice, elevated louder than ever, as a man transact that great affair of judging and convincing men face to face, and together therewith shake and remove heaven earth, once for all, even for everlasting. As therefore the exhortation apostle useth, 'Refuse not him that speaks from heaven' (which is founded upon this motive, 'For now he hath promised, saying, I shake heaven earth"), must needs be acknowledged to take hold of us; so likewise motive or foundation itself, which that exhortation is made upon, must granted in like manner, to hold and continue in force together therewith and therefore the performance of it (which keeps it in force) continues to this day as well as then. Yea, and as some observe from those words 'He hath promised, saying, I shake,' that word saying had reference to that of the 25th verse, 'him that speaks,' or to him speaking, as particularly what among other things he is a-saying and speaking now from heaven, to move us to attend to him; even this of the prophet, 'I shake, though said by way of prophecy afore, yet is now said by himself heaven over again, by way of renewed promise and performance. From heaven he still says, 'I am he that shakes heavens,' &c., therefore hear him; or, as Paul, and 'therefore refuse him not.'

3. From those words of St Paul, 'Now he hath promised;' that is, from that particular of it; that he calleth it a promise as yet to be performed, this assertion is yet more and more argued; for he says not, which according to his promise he hath performed, as he would have spoken, and was meet to have been said if it had been fully accomplished; but, as being a matter still under a promise, which is always of things yet to come as faith and hope are, and so yet to be performed. Paul says, he now hath promised the constellation of that promise of Haggai (though in part performed) yet still reigning, and in its influences not having the whole those events it portended as yet come to pass. And for this Paul giveth an unanswerable argument, that still much of it must remain under promise, for the main import of that word 'yet once more,' which Paul puts upon it, is to note out that the thing to be effected was 'the removal of the things shaken,' as well as shaking them; and this to the end to settle and establish 'things which cannot be shaken.' Thus Paul expoundeth it, ver. 27, 'this word,' in the prophet, 'yet once more,' says he, 'signifieth the removal of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made; that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.' And therefore it is an undeniable argument, that Paul's meaning was to hold forth (and that argued by him, out of the words of the prophet himself) that that promise was not yet fully performed, but the main thing intended, namely, the removing work, remained yet to be done, and so under promise.

For it is undeniable, that upon Christ's first coming, and being upon earth, the heavens or earth then shaken by him, whether you would understand the Jewish worship, expound it of what you will, what was shaken by him was not actually removed, but continued still, though loose and weak; and those that confine, it to the first coming, and Christ's being on earth, interpret the

shaking the heaven, &c., of those signs in the heavens, as eclipsing the sun and moon at his passion; in the sea, when the winds were calmed by him, &c. But still I urge, as Paul doth here, these were not removed then. The sun is where, and as it was, &c., yea, though the veil of the temple was rent then, to shew that in his death the Jewish worship had its fatal blow given it virtually by his death; yet actually it was not removed till afterwards, nay, not till after Paul's time and death, and this epistle written. And I further urge, that for the same reason that, according to Haggai's prophecy, the Jewish worship was to be removed, namely, because shaken by Christ at his death, by the same reason the sun, and moon, and earth, &c., are to be removed, ere this prophecy shall end, for these also were shaken then; and the apostle tells us, that the prophet intended the removing of those things that are or were shaken; yea, and the shaking, or putting out of course the heavens and sea then did signify, that one day they were to be removed; yea, the word signifies the removing of things shakeable (or as the margin varies it, 'which may be shaken'), that are capable of it; and the apostle adds, 'as of things that are made': so then whatever things are made and shakeable, whether it be Jewish worship or these visible heavens or earth, made for a time, and begun to be shaken by Christ then, to shew they were shakeable, and but as it were artificial stuff made by God for a time, or whatever else was or is to come in the world that is human, or set up by men made with hands, is according to that prophecy to be shaken and removed, and therefore it must still needs remain as a promise unperformed in the main part of its accomplishment.

Yea, and 4thly, it may, according to this, perhaps not be found wholly contrary to the apostle's spope, but congeniate thereunto to say, that in those words, 'But now he hath promised, saying' (they referring to him that speaks from heaven, ver. 25, as was said), Paul doth bring in our Lord Christ, as now since his being in heaven, anew ratifying and saying over again the same promise which had been delivered by Haggai, as that which was to receive a more full and perfect accomplishment. It is Christ whom Haggai brought in at the first speaking these words; for in Haggai the prophecy runs thus, ' Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I will shake,' &c. It was this Son of God, the Lord of hosts, who gave the law (for his voice then shook the earth), and who also spake this there, and promised to come in man's nature, and become the Desire of all nations, and who, as Paul, since his going to heaven, says, now hath promised, namely, again, himself now saying, and using those his own words which, in Haggai, he had afore uttered by a prophecy foretelling it afore his first coming, only because he speaks them now when he had begun to perform it, he alters the tense and says, 'I shake.' And then the result is but this, that the Desire of all nations coming according to Haggai's prophecy, and shaking all nations as he was a-coming, and shaking heaven and earth, upon his being come on earth, and he having, whilst on earth, and upon his first coming, but performed part of what was intended, and incompletely, it became him now when gone to heaven, having apostles to utter his mind from heaven, as infallibly as ever by Haggai he had done; it was but suitable, I say, to declare and utter by Paul, as also by Peter, in their doctrine, that he from heaven had ratified and confirmed that promise afresh, and that in the same words before delivered, especially there being so much of it yet behind, and so main and essential a part thereof yet left unpaid, - so that he renews his bond for performance of what is behind; his former bond in Haggai remaining uncanceled till the whole should be fully paid in, and he only renews it for more clearness and further security.

And so there are according to these two last, the third and fourth positions: two senses to be given that well stand together of these words, But now he hath promised, saying,'

1. That now, under the gospel, the time is come of which and concerning which he hath or had thus promised in Haggai; and this is conispondant to the third position. Or else,
2. The sense of the words refers to the time of renewing again this promise, that is, Now again he hath promised' since he went to heaven. This like sense we find, Heb. i. 6, 'And again, when he

bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith,' &c., where the word again may either be taken as referring to he saith, that is, 'again he saith,' as a new quotation added to two that went afore, to prove Christ the Son of God, very God; or it may be taken as referring to his 'bringing him into world again.'

And as congruous to this last meaning given, Ambrose and Chrysosto gloss upon this word yet once more may fitly be taken in; they supposing as in this explanation I do, that Christ by his apostles from heaven now uttered this promise after his first coming in the flesh. And if Christ indeed be thus brought in here by Paul after his being gone to heaven, as renewing the promise afresh, and saying yet once more, then it necessarily points out a second performance, yet under promise, that should end all and once for all; us not having so thoroughly performed what Haggai had prophesied of at his being on earth, and so withal it gives an account of the reason and necessity of renewing this promise. For Paul in his recourse to the words of Haggai, having proved the promise to be as unfulfilled in a great part, when in the 27th verse he urgeth, that once more in the prophet's intention, to signify the removing of those things that were shaken, therefore hence it was that Christ had renewed or now again promised the same since his going to heaven, that yet once more He would come and shake, so as to remove what he shook; which was meet for him both now to promise, and hereafter to effect. And according to this intent, the words of the 26th verse are to be understood as a new promise now given forth; yet renewed and made in Haggai's words, both the analogy and the likeness of the things promised by the one and other to be done, as also because he was now to do in effect but what Haggai promised should be done by him. And, as conspiring with this sense, you may take in the word once more used in the 27th verse, to refer partly to the very words of Haggai, as a proof that Haggai intended the same; and yet withal, that word is to be taken as an explanation of what this renewed promise principally aimed at, as hath been explained.

Now in the fifth place, that Paul here had in his eye the second coming of Christ, or at least that effect that shall accompany it, namely, that shaking heaven and earth then, is evident.

1. There is not until then a full removal of all that is made, and that is to be removed; and then, to be sure, it will be done, finally and once all. And whatever removal else of any other heavens or earth can put in a plea to have been intended, this which I allege can and may plead the same reason to have been intended. This hath a visible earth and heaven, reserved for Christ to shew his power upon, in the removal and change of them, 2 Peter iii. 7. 'The heavens and the earth which are now, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men. And if any other heavens and earth come within the verge of Paul's reason here, why they were at any time removed, 'as of things that are made' (which is the apostle's reason; and he speaks in the language of universality), then all things whatever, one as well as another, that were alike made to be removed at any time by God, do come within the compass of the same sentence. And as it is an universal law against all men, 'It is appointed for all men once to die,' so is this an universal judgment passed upon all things, which the word of God tells us, were made but to serve for a time one as well as another, and therefore takes hold of these heavens and earth, which the word of God doth declare to us to be kept in store for the fire, and to be in respect of the condition they now are in, or use they now serve for, but as a stage or masquer-house, which, when the story of this world is ended, is to be removed. And,

2. More particularly; the apostle's scope is clearly to work a dread and awe in the hearts of those he wrote to, of this great person that speaks from heaven, as one that threatens and will execute vengeance on them that will refuse to hear him: ver. 25, 'If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.' And to edge and pursue this exhortation, thus mingled with threatening, he allegeth this promise of shaking the heavens and the earth one day, parallel to that at the giving

the law, and concludeth it with this, 'For our God is a consuming fire:' therein more eminently pointing at that change and removal of the earth and heavens, and the destruction of wicked men at the latter day. Even as Peter had also spoken; and comparing the words, we have an eviction in them: 2 Peter iii. 7, 'But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.'

Neither, 3, is there any other shaking the heavens and the earth which holds so fair and clear a correspondency with that shaking the earth by Jesus Christ (which Paul here mentions as the parallel of his shaking the heavens intended by him), which was at the giving the law, as this of the latter doth, and may therefore be supposed more intended than any other. For then, as at the 18th verse of this chapter, he came down with fire and smoke; 'the mountain burned with fire, and there was blackness, darkness, and tempest, the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words' uttered by angels, chap. ii. 2, which they could not endure, verses 18, 19: so now there is parallel with it, his coming at the latter day, as to the Thessalonians in each epistle Paul hath set it forth: 1 Thess. iv 16, 'The Lord himself from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God.' And 2 Thess. i. 8, 'With his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not the gospel of God.' And Paul speaks suitably, Heb. xii. 25, 'See you refuse not him that speaks from heaven.' (obey his gospel); for if his voice then shook the earth thus, it will one day shake the heavens, and he manifest himself a consuming fire, rendering vengeance unto such.

4. Add to this, that Peter having treated of this great day, and burning heaven and earth by fire (as hath been cited, chap. iii. of his epistle, from the 5th to the 15th), he confirmeth the doctrine of it, and his exhortation thereon founded, from the testimony of Paul, who, as he says, had in all his epistles, but especially now in an epistle written to the Jews (which is this to the Hebrews, to whom also Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, directed these of his, 1 Peter i. 1, as is generally acknowledged) inculcated the same. Now where, in all this epistle to the Hebrews, can any passage be singled forth, that hold so direct a correspondency with those in Peter, as these words do? both speaking so alike of the removing and burning of heaven and the earth by the power of Christ, who is a consuming fire. So, then, we have Peter's testimony concurring with us in this interpretation.

And thus much for Paul's more eminent intention. I come to Haggai's. It is, in the second place, as clear, that Haggai his scope was, to fix, eyes of the Jews he wrote unto upon the first coming of Christ in the flesh, and the signs and effects of that coming of his, both those which afore, or accompanied his presence on earth, or followed presently after.

1. He must needs intend the first coming of Christ in the flesh, when he uttered that promise, ver. 7, '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;' not only because that was yet to come, in the days of his prophecy, and it was the first coming that was to come between his times and this second coming of Christ, but because it was next and most in the eyes and expectations of himself and these Jews he spake to. And it was that coming, concerning which the promise of yet a little while was made, and must needs be supposed to have its first and immediate reference unto, put in for relieving the impatience of that people's spirits, who waited so long. Whereas, had it only and immediately respected the second coming of Christ, it had not been yet a little while to them, but far larger (as now in our days it is since Haggai's time), than from their coming of Egypt until then.

2. His scope argues it, which was to encourage them to finish the temple, and to comfort themselves against the outward meanness of it, in comparison of the former built by Solomon. And he comforts them with this, that the Messiah himself should come into this second temple;

ver. 8, 9, 'The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.' He points to that material temple then a-building, as those words show, ver. 8. and so his meaning is; whereas the temple of Solomon, destroyed by the Babylonians, was in all outward respects far more glorious in proportion and was filled with a glory from God at the dedication of it. Know (says the prophet) that a greater glory shall in the end fill this. And Malachi utters the very same, 'He whom ye delight in' (their Messiah) 'shall come into his temple,' Mal. iii. 1; where he so often preached and uttered His glory: John xviii. 20, 'Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.' And thus the Jews generally, afore the destruction of the temple, understood the mind of this prophecy to be, that that temple should stand to the coming of Messiah; but since, the Jews have sought evasions, because, if granted, it is an undeniable argument of our Christ being come in the flesh.

3. The shaking of the heavens and the earth, Haggai himself interprets, ver. 21, 22, of throwing down kingdoms and monarchies during that space or small remnant of time left, as forerunning signs that the king and Lord of all the world was a-coming into it: 'Speak to Zerubbabel, governor Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by, the sword of his brother.' These stirs began a little after Haggai's time throughout the earth; and that the prophet had those confusions in all other nations, which were antecedaneous to Christ's first coming, in his eye, is eminent by this, that for the comfort of the Jews he tells them both (ver. 9) that they in the mean time should have peace, as in comparison of all other nations they eminently had; as the stories of the Maecabees and of Josephus shew. And he says that Zerubbabel and his successors should be as a signet, whom God would have a dear and special care to preserve (ver. 23) in the midst of those general commotions. Thus far Haggai's next and more immediate meaning doth reach.

The next thing is, to make the reconciliation of these two, Paul and Haggai. We must hold this fast as a most certain truth, that Paul here quotes that place of Haggai according to the true aim that the Holy Ghost intended; for he setting himself in this epistle all along to prove what he asserts out of the Old Testament, his scope therein being to confirm the Jews he wrote to in the great points of Christian religion, they would expect (being many of them unsettled) that the proofs which he should allege should be punctual and convictive; and in that he so expressly termeth that shaking a promise in his time, and yet to be fulfilled, it necessarily argues it so intended by the Holy Ghost, as a thing then promised and prophesied of by Haggai. For the reconciliation and demonstration thereof, I shall lay down these four general assertions.

1st. General position is, that the scope of Haggai, as well as Paul, is to comprehend and sum up all the proceedings and transactions of Christ under the gospel, throughout his whole reign, in shaking and removing what is heterogeneous or opposite to his kingdom, and advancing thereof to its perfect glory. And this position alone, if cleared, will sufficiently reconcile both, and justify Paul's quotation as pertinent. I shall clear this assertion in such a manner as at once to prevent objections, as well as establish the truth of it by degrees.

1. I observe in Haggai two things distinctly prophesied of: the one, the coming of Christ the Messiah; the other, 'I will shake the heavens and the earth, &c., and all nations.' And then take this along with you, to prevent a great mistake, that the Holy Ghost's intention, in his mention of the latter, is not only or barely of them as signs and tokens that should fore-run or accompany that his coming - the restraining it unto which alone hath caused a narrowing of the prophet's scope - but it is withal to be understood as the great design and consequent or business of the

coming of the Messiah, as Lord of the world, into the world. He speaks of the work which he should effect, and came for, and is therefore one distinct part of this prophecy, and as eminent as the other of his coming. And to put such an eminent observancy of it, he mentions it first in order', 'I will shake, and the Desire of all nations shall come.'" Which order of the words hath occasioned some to confine this shaking to what passed afore Christ's coming, and so only to the forerunning signs thereof which must be acknowledged, is to be taken into the prophet's scope. But to the full comprehension of his meaning, or the Holy Ghost's rather, this shaking is to be understood of a great design God had, farther than Christ's first coming; and so to hold forth one great part of the counsel of God towards this world, in the changes and alterations thereof, as the main errand of the Messiah's coming. And indeed, even those that most restrain it to the first coming of Christ, as prodigies and signs, &c., of it, do yet contradict themselves in this; that they interpret, -

(1.) This shaking the heavens, not only of what went afore his coming - but of what also after his coming whilst upon earth. And,

(2.) That the shaking of all nations, they interpret the conversion of Gentiles to the Christian faith, which was to be after Christ's being gone to heaven. And so according even to their interpretation, it is not to be understood in this sense only of fore-running signs, as to this sense, I will do all these things afore, and then the Desire of all nations shall come. And you may observe, that Paul here mentions not at all that part of the prophecy of the Messiah's coming, nor did he cite it as a proof or evidence of the Messiah's being come (though it served most fitly thereto), but takes that for granted, and chiefly singleth out that part of it which was the designed work of his coming when come, as that which is to be the demonstration of his power and glory, thereby to work a dread in the hearts of those he wrote unto, and all men to whom the sound thereof should come, how great a person he was that now spake from heaven, evidenced from greatness of the work which was the design of his coming, even to shake and remove the heavens and earth itself, as was here prophesied of him, and who therefore would be to the refusers of him a consuming fire.

2. The word once more, or yet once, is in the prophet not to be joined or put in construction with this part of the prophecy, 'the Desire of all the nations shall come,' as to this sense, that yet once, and he shall come, and but once. That were an evident falsehood to have spoken in days; for Messiah had in the days of his prophecy both a first and a second coming, as in distinction from the first it is called, chap. ix. 28;- Yot therefore observe the apostle applying and conjoining the word once more only unto this other part, 'Yet once more, and I will shake heaven and earth,' leaving that other particle 'it is a little while' to be applied to other of his coming by the prophet spoken of, taking and urging this once as properly belonging to his work of shaking. And,

3. As this word yet once is to be understood as relating to this work or business to be done, so it was put in to signify and import the thorough and effectual performance of that work, as the greatest and last that God hath a purpose to do; that it shall not cease when begun, till he hath thoroughly shaken, and removed, and settled once for ever that which shall never be shaken; and so that it is the utmost and last that shall be done. God hath but this one work to do, to remove all that is made, and to set up a kingdom which cannot be moved; so that the expression once imports he will make but one work of it. And in this sense Paul urgeth the import and signification of the word yet once more. And this also discovers another mistake that diverts the interpretation; for the word once sounds (at the first hearing of it) as if it noted out only some point of one time, whereas all that is to be done shall be at once done, or mainly some one special instant of time allotted for what is to be done, and that done in a trice (as may we say), once, so as not be done again a second time. But if it be so understood, it cannot be applied to that part of the prophecy concerning the coming of Christ, for so it were a manifest falsehood;

and so to say in that sense, 'he shall come,' were a contradiction to that which Haggai asserts, that he should come, not only a first, but a second time. But to apply it to this work of shaking and removing all things, as noting forth the thorough and effectual doing of it, a doing it to purpose, this sense will admit a continuation of that work for a long while; yea, and therein a reiteration of doing the same thing towards it again and again (when but imperfectly at first), until it be done thoroughly and to purpose, and hath attained its full intended perfection at last. A man may be said to intend to write but one book or treatise once for all, and after it no other (as the utmost sum of his thoughts), and yet be a-writing it by pieces for many years, yea, over and over, till he hath completed and perfected it. So here to say, 'yet once more I will shake, so as to remove, and then no more,' will bear and admit a shaking, and shaking again over and over; first, one piece or part of an old building, suppose, and then another, till he hath perfectly renewed it, and set up another once for all in the room thereof. For all is but one and the same work, though necessarily reiterated until perfected; and that perfection at last is the once that was intended. Or look, as that may be said to be but one earthquake, which continuing for many days, hath yet many throbs, and shakes down first one house, then another; or that travail but one birth that yet hath many throes; so here, the word 'yet once more' will, without any such contradiction, admit and take into its comprehension the whole work of Christ's shaking and removing, 'from first to last, and every part and parcel thereof, as belonging and appertaining to all and every piece thereof, unto one perfect complete work, which when done is done once for ever. Now then, to restrain it unto those first times of the gospel, and the shakings that first accompanied Christ's first coming, is to restrain it from the attainment of its full end, and limit it unto what is imperfect, and but the least piece of this work. So then, though this word yet once being applied unto Christ's coming, or to those words, 'the Desire of all nations shall come,' would exclude a second meaning; yet being thus understood and applied (as it ought) to the work and business itself, as the intent of his coming, then it will also admit a first and second coming, or a third (if a third were to come), and all of them prophesied of, whenas all of them are in order to effect and complete the business that is at length to be fully done.

4. I observe, the apostle doth indeed draw and interpret Haggai's shaking heavens and earth, &c., to this, that God's great design, or that one work (as we say), is to remove what is made, diverse from, or not belonging to a kingdom, which he means to set up as his utmost master-piece, once for all; and then he hath done for ever, and will do no more. This is expressed, ver. 27, 28, 'And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably.' It is evident by the contexture of Paul's speech, that he doth collect or infer from this prophetic speech of Haggai this kingdom of Christ, which cannot be moved, as intended and prophesied of by Haggai, as well as the removal of things that were made to be preludes to it. That same wherefore, ver. 23, sounds forth this a reference to, with an inference from the prophet's speech; he strongly enforcing both from that one word of the prophet, 'yet once more.' For as Beza glosseth on it from the word yet, in, he infers the moveable condition of all other things that are not ingredients into Christ's kingdom. And from the word once more (as we use to speak) he argues something that shall succeed it, and be in the room of it, when the other is removed, that shall remain, and so shall become a work of God's once for ever. And both these, I say, equally and alike are inferred from the prophet's words.

Now there is nothing more consonant to reason than that the prophet's scope should be to prophesy of Christ's kingdom, under those expressions of shaking heaven and earth, &c., as signifying thereby the removal and throwing down all high and potent oppositions thereunto, or possessing the room thereof. Yea, and it became him as well to insert the prophecy of this then, when he spake of his coming in the flesh, as conjoined therewith and the designed work thereof. For,

(1.) The setting up this immoveable kingdom of Christ was the issue and mark of all the prophets that have been since the world began, as Zechariah in his song tells us; of which David speaks (upon whose throne he knew Messiah was to sit, Acts ii. 30), and others also in many psalms, Ps. lxxxii., xciii., xciv., xcv., xcvi., xcvii., xcvi., &c.; and Daniel also speaks to the same purpose, Dan. viii. 2, 24, and chap. vii. 9, 27: in all which when you read, you will find the throwing down of all other kingdoms and worldly excellencies that have, or should have, never so firm a rooting in the world, are still prophesied of, in order to the erecting this kingdom of Christ. And so, whilst many of the prophets prophesied of the one, they necessarily intended the other. To express this out of Daniel once for all, chap. ii. 44, 45, 'The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; but it shall break in pieces the iron, the brass, clay, and the gold, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand ever.' Or, if you will have it in the Psalmist's words (reiterated again and again) sounding nearer to the apostle's here, 'The Lord reigneth; the world also' (that new world he brings in) 'shall be established, that it shall be moved.' Now then Haggai prophesying, though under another meteor namely, the shaking of the heavens and earth, the sea, and the dry land (which phrases, how they serve to express the removing all these, or whatever else can be supposed made, or heterogeneous to it, I shall here shew), the prophet doing this together and with the same breath when he prophesies of Messiah's coming; this must needs be acknowledged with the rest of its fellow-prophecies, to point at and intend the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ, where, in order to the erection of it, he foretells removing of all else, even from the heights above to the depths below; else that possessed the room of it; especially, considering that the erecting of this kingdom is made by all the holy prophets and apostles, the end, errand, or business of Christ's coming into the world, whereof, together with it, this our prophet here speaketh. And further,

(2.) He that shall duly weigh the prophet's inserting this royal title his, 'The Desire of all nations,' whilst he prophesies this of him, that he should shake all nations, may perhaps easily be persuaded to judge this to be most genuine and natural import thereof; even prophetically to shew what he should be unto all nations, when shaken and converted to him, even their Lord and king. Then, when he hath by shaking all nations converted these and brought them under his subjection, and so taken, the words are found expressly to prophesy of this his kingdom, to be set over all nations, not over the Jews only; for we all know, that desire to another (which is all one, as to call that other one's desire) is put to express subjection to him as a lord or superior; as that of the wife to the husband, 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband,' which is explained, 'and he shall rule over thee,' Gen. 'ii. 16. And again, chap. iv. 7, the subjection of Abel as the younger brother (by the law of nature then) is likewise thus expressed, 'Unto thee' (speaking to Cain) 'shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.' And more pertinently, in the same language, did Samuel prophesy to Saul that he should be chosen, and set up as king by all the tribes of Israel: he thus expresseth it, 'On whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee?' 1 Sam. ix. 20. It is as much as to say, that their desire is to make thee their king and ruler. And thus Haggai here says of all the nations of the world, receiving Christ for their king, 'The Desire of all nations shall come, and shake all nations;' so expressly prophesying of his kingdom, and converting all nations to him, and removing what is opposite to that his kingdom among them.

5. Now from hence, in the first place, it will easily follow, that this work and design is such as the proceedings of it do take up and run along through the whole time of the New Testament, the space of Christ's reign, and is not to be limited to any particular, as the removal of Moses's law, or the like. Yea, and indeed that was the prophet's intendment, to include all as well as any one; both which are evident if we consider,

(1.) That the whole time of the New Testament is allotted to this work, that is, the removal of what is opposite, and the advancement of his kingdom. Christ hath both set that whole time to effect it in, and is continually a-doing of it one way or other; 'He must reign' (that is, continue to reign, having then begun to reign) 'until he hath put all things under his feet, and subdued all

things under him;' which therefore, while he reigns, he goes on to do age after age. And though some one age may bring forth a full birth of some eminent shaking of what had been long and fixedly rooted in the world before, yet the occurrence of those many ages afore had wrought together to the ripening of it; and when some one such piece is completed, then a new design is set on foot to shake some other thing that riseth up, or which was left in opposition to his kingdom. one way or other, so as this work is perpetrated throughout that whole time. And this agrees with Daniel's prophecy, which, as you heard, in the matter prophesied of agrees with Haggai, who sets out the whole time of the New Testament, as the space allotted for this work; whilst he foretelleth, that in the days of the fourth monarchy a kingdom should be set up, which, after the setting it up, should by degrees break in pieces all those kingdoms, to advance its own throne and dominion for ever: Dan. ii. 44, 'And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever;' so that all the time, from the days when it first began, which was upon Christ's first coming and ascending to heaven in the days of the Roman empire, to its attainment of the full sole dominion, is allotted for the 'breaking in pieces,' or in Haggai's phrase 'shaking,' in Paul's, 'removing and subduing,' all things else that stand in the way of it. And because this kingdom was, when Paul wrote this, in existence, and actually begun, therefore Paul said, 'we receiving a kingdom,' which must shake and remove all things else. And thus Paul's now, Haggai's yet once more, Daniel's days of the kingdoms of this world, are one and the same space of time set out, though a long one, for this great work of shaking, that was to continue during that time. And,

(2.) It will hence follow, that Haggai, thus prophesying of the work of Christ's reign and kingdom, must be understood to have intended all such shakings, one as well as another, that are in order thereto; for the same reason why any one shaking of one sort or kind, in order to advance Christ's kingdom, should and doth hold as well, and carry us on to any and to all other that tend alike to the same end. For though the things shaken may be diverse, yet the work of shaking them is all of one and the same. But especially because Haggai, by his shaking, manifestly intended a removal, and a thorough removal of all, as of one work, once for all, thereof no other than the total removal of all things; and so of one as well as the other, though one after another, must be alike intended by him. His once more extends itself to all that Christ himself (in whose name he spake) intended to do of this kind of work. I will do it once, that is, thoroughly and so rest and cease from all such kind of work for ever. Now, therefore whoever should confine the prophet's aim and speech to any one kind of shaking, in some one age (as suppose that of the Jewish fabric in the primitive times), when yet Christ had designed divers as great works of removal of other things afterwards, would thereby, though unwarily, make the prophet to speak an untruth. For after he had in Christ's name said 'once more I shake,' and but once more I will shake, and then no more but end and cease that kind of work, as that word once imports; and and Christ should yet afterwards shake other things as great, yea, greater than the first that were shaken, even the gospel worship and administrations themselves that came in the room of the Jewish by Christ's institution, and last of all these heavens and earth, this would be untrue. Therefore this word once more, being thus put in, signifies both a total removal and a thorough shaking, as one entire, complete work, of all but Christ's kingdom, and what it was for ever to to remain. Hence therefore necessarily it must take into the compass of it all and every shaking of Christ's, in their succession, in after ages, from first to last, and bind and grasp them all into one bundle. For if any were left out, and were after to be done, Haggai's once more having put a period to that kind of work, had precluded and fore-spoken their being never to be done. For why, God had by the prophet set out his finis to that sort of work, and engaged himself hereby to do no more the like. On the other side, whilst any one piece of this work were yet left to be done, it might not only be said the whole work was imperfect, but that Haggai's prophecy was not yet fulfilled and accomplished; for he prophesied of a full, final, and total removal, in saying but 'once more I will shake' and yet still something was left and remained behind; it must necessarily, therefore, take in all.

4. This will more clearly appear, if we bring all or any such particular instances of shakings, which any have gone about to determine the date of this prophecy withal, and to circumscribe its meaning in the circle of it, to a due trial and examination. The issue of which trial will be found that no man will know where rationally to fix the non ultra of it in particular accomplishments, and to stay the waves of it, but so as the like reason will break in upon him, and carry him on to take in still more more to the end of the world; or else some defect, or absurdity or other. Which will appear in such a confinement. Which will appear by bringing each their order to their trial, and let them each put in their plea.

1. Will any pitch upon these great alterations in states and kingdoms which did forerun his coming, and took up the space between Haggai's and Christ's time, and those prodigies in the heavens, which are usually cited by interpreters, that fell out before Christ? If he will therewith shut up the extent of the prophecy, he will not only, (1.) much eclipse the spreading glorious beams of this prophecy; but, (2.) exclude thereby these prodigies and miracles in the heavens and the earth that were wrought when Christ was in the flesh, and afore he went to heaven. And,

2. Those that will further extend into that date of Christ's ascension, so take in the signs that accompany his being come, as well as those that forewent it, still will find they leave out that glorious shaking of all in the conversion of the Gentiles and nations, which Haggai here and all the prophets spake of; and which is the greatest evidence that Christ is not come only, but is ascended, and hath erected that kingdom in all nations which shall never be removed. For Christ was but new gone to heaven, the apostles found the house at Jerusalem only shaking under them, and three thousand converted, whenas afterwards the whole world was. He, upon his ascension, receiving all power in heaven and earth to shake both; thereupon 'the gathering of the people was to him,' and all nations began to desire him, and stand astonished at him. And so therewith we must admit the alterations of the primitive times, wherein Paul and other apostles saw this effected, and so Paul's now, to be that present age. And,

3. Having gone so far, we shall be tolled on to comprehend in the aim of the prophecy, that great and eminent change, above all other, of Moses his ceremonial law, which the apostle so much inculcates in this epistle, that 'with the change of the high priest, there must needs be a change of the law;' and herewith most interpreters do bound it, as having received a fair and full accomplishment, this change being, as they allege, but once for all. For the gospel, or kingdom of heaven, that comes in the room of it, is an everlasting gospel: 'and the word we preach to you,' saith Peter, 'abides for ever.' This change indeed, because it fell out first, interpreters have rested on, and thought it enough; yet to set up the rest here, and stretch it no further, is evidently short and defective, and hath its absurdities. For,

(1.) In this very comparison which the apostle here useth, Moses his law, worship, &c., doth bear but the proportion of the earth; and therefore Moses is said to speak on earth (ver. 25) in comparison of what Christ brought in, the ordinances, institutions, and administrations of which are called heavenly in opposition to them (Heb. ix. 23), as being given by him that was from heaven. Now, the change that Paul brings the prophet to foretell, is expressly said to be not only the removal of the earth, but of the heavens also. And so the prophet's scope is not accomplished in the abolition of the Jewish, but even the heavenly ordinances, which had been brought in in their stead, must one day be removed by virtue of it; and to fulfil it, the sun, and the moon, and the stars, the ordinances that rule and govern the times of the gospel, must also be shaken and dissolved; so as that change of the Jewish state is but a mean and a low one in comparison of what Haggai meant and intended. Yea, and the gospel ordinances being removed as well as the Jewish was, the prophecy is to cease; the Lord's supper, &c., to continue but till Christ comes. Nor Paul nor Haggai could have said that God would shake but once, and mean the Jewish earth only, when after that these heavens were to be removed also; he thereby

endeavouring to reach the highest and utmost change, whatever that could or ever should be.
And,

(2.) Though the Jewish fabric was in Paul's time shaken, when he wrote this, yet it was not removed till after; for the temple worship stood some years after this epistle. And the apostle speaks of a removal of what is shaken, not a shaking only; and so the prophet also. And so it must yet be stretched to the destruction of Jerusalem, after the apostle's death. And if intended thus of the Mosaical rites, then as yet it is not fully accomplished; for the Jews to this day stick to a uphold those observations of the ceremonial law, even all which their exile out of their country will permit them. And our apostle tells us that Moses's veil is still upon their hearts, but when converted it shall be taken away (2 Cor. iii.); so it may be truly said that it is removed, as here. And therefore till there is not (no, not in that respect) a full accomplishment of Haggai prophecy so understood. So, then, still we are under this promise un the Jews' conversion; and the prophet's intention having gone these many miles with us, we may easily persuade ourselves it will go throughout the world's end, and reach the day of judgment, as by this invincible reason it doth. For till then the ordinances of heaven, the gospel institutions, will not be removed.

(3.) And it having stretched its line over all time, to such changes yet come, we may as well enclose within the compass of it all other alterations of religions, false and supposititious, that are and have been found in the world during all this space of time, or shall fall out; and bring them in to pay contribution unto Haggai's prophecy; as that change of the whole Roman world from heathenish religion to embrace Christianity, and popish idolatry to the purity of worship, and the alterations of states kingdoms together herewith; and all these may be inferred by as good a warrant out of the prophet, as that change made of the Jewish religion and kingdom, not only because these are all in Scripture language denominated heavens and earth, as well as any of the former, but further, because, -

[1] The shaking which Haggai prophesied of, was a shaking in all nations and so is not only, much less principally, meant of the Jews or Jews' religion only, whose law was given only unto that nation, and not the Gentiles, though converted unto Christ. It imports therefore, that Christ would make some work in all the nations, as he did in the Jewish. That look what was done to the green tree of the Jewish religion, &c., should be done to the dry; the same elsewhere. And,

[2] It is not a shaking of persons only in conversion, but of things that are to be removed, they are the subjects of this abolition, which is evident from the interpreting it of that judicial remove, which was not only effected by the conversion of many of that nation to Christ, which was but common to them with all other nations; but chiefly it is to be understood of abolition of the temple sacrifices, &c. And by the like proportion of reason (this being a shaking of all nations, not the Jewish only, as that which more expressly and literally spoken than that of the Jews), the shaking and removal of all things in all nations, and not of the conversion only of persons in all nations that are opposite to, or possess the room of Christ's kingdom, will come in to have been intended, and as eminently. And therefore -

[3] The apostle interprets it of the shaking of all things made, not persons only, as the principal subjects of this vengeance. And there are and ha been in all nations things made, and so made to be destroyed. All things that are human in religion, whether false religions themselves, or what is superstition in the true, comes under the same praemunire of Haggai's prophecy that the Jewish religion did, and by juster sentence; for that had a better plea for itself, having been made by God. And to be sure, they are much rather to be removed than the ordinances of the gospel, which were made by Christ himself, which yet must submit to this general law, and suffer this fall in the end, by virtue of this writ of prophecy that comes to us by Haggai's commission. And,

[4] If it be thus extended to changes in religion in all nations, diverse from the gospel, and removing all such things that stand in a nearer competition with the things belonging to Christ's kingdom, then truly we may without much difficulty be persuaded to take in all the alterations, shakings, and removals civil that have been in states for religion's sake, and in the quarrel of Christ and his truth, which have at any time since fallen out in the world. For,

First; If those alterations in kingdoms, which foreran the coming of Christ, as signs of it, are taken in by Haggai, and so interpreted by Haggai himself, ver. 20 of this chapter (of which more anon), then much more these commotions in all nations that have followed upon his going to heaven (seeing those in religion since Christ's ascension are entertained into it), not only because they are of the same rank and sort, and so may as aptly come into this catalogue and account as their fellows afore Christ did ; but further, because they are proper and immediate effects of his being come, yea, demonstrations and puttings forth of his power and rule, that was given when he went to heaven. Whereas those other were but signs of his coming to come, and so warnings to the world that when he should come, he would do the same, and far greater. And,

Secondly; The powers and dominions in all are and have been the great upholders of those things in religion that were made to be destroyed, and so, having still cast their lot with them, will alike perish together. Yea, the powers of this world have been the great opposers of the interest of Christ in all ages, and are therefore more particularly set out as Christ's mark to remove and subdue: 'He must rule, till He hath put down all rule and dominion.' And,

Thirdly; The Jewish state; the sceptre or government of it was broken, as well as their religion abrogated; and so shall all other, so far as they stick to what is false. And, -

Fourthly; States and kingdoms, and the governments, and powers, and ranks in them, are as ordinarily set forth by this metaphor of heaven and earth; and the changes therein, by the shaking of heaven or earth, as any other. And the shaking of all conditions of persons in them, when opposite to the gospel, is more properly a shaking the nations themselves (which is the letter of the prophecy) than any other accomplishment.

Fifthly; By the conduct of these threads that have carried us to this length of time, the end of the world, to this extent of things, to all that is made in religion, to all powers that oppose and stand in the way of Christ's kingdom, we may now be brought to think that nothing is to be left out of the reach of Haggai's net, but that it is cast over all that is any way or ever to be removed; and so throw this line of desolation over the visible heaven and earth we see, which we know one day will be removed.

Sixthly, and lastly, We may also think the last days of the gospel the special times intended for the perfecting these works of, Christ. For,

1st, Though it be true that Haggai doth explicitly in his words and intendment fix his eye upon that first coming of Christ in the flesh, as that which he eminently points, 'A little while, and the Desire of all nations shall come;' yet this hinders not, but that his intendment was to prophesy of that kingdom he should come to set up in shaking all nations, and removing in all nations what was opposite thereto during his whole reign. For all and every of such changes he should make, from his first coming to the end, were alike the end of that his coming and taking man's nature, and their original, their motion and influence were from thence. This was the spring did from that time set all the wheels agoing, which have never since ceased; wheel moving within wheel (as Ezekiel), until this engine brought then into the world hath forced down all the old frame of things whatever, and set up a new, which work hath in every age gone on, more secretly or

openly, to this day. And therefore it were derogatory to the honour of Christ to limit the prophet's intent unto the occurrences that fell out at his first coming, or in that age. And if there had been no other dependence between this great design and his first coming, than simply that the putting it in execution beareth date from thence, and it had its rise and beginning therefrom, it were sufficient reason that first coming alone should be so eminently mentioned above any other, though the whole of what followed thereon were intended. But further, it was causal, and set it all a-foot. Nor was it needful in that respect explicitly to mention his second coming, though that should be for the complete accomplishment of the; work. Besides,

2nd. No wonder if the prophet in his times, primarily, and in the first place, and explicitly did foretell his first coming; because the time he lived in was that in which the Jews had their eminent, and in some respect their only, expectation of the promised Messiah: the next great thing to be done, which their eyes and hearts were intent upon. And it is as little a wonder, if the apostle in his time (after that coming was past), carries on the eyes and hearts of these Jews he wrote to, to all that yet remained to be accomplished of this work, and was yet behind (whereof the greatest part by far was to come), and more especially to a second coming, which should accomplish it; which brings me to the second part of this assuagement or reconciliation of Haggai and Paul, to be added to the former, to make the answer full; - namely, that one and the same prophecy had often such a comprehensiveness in it, as it may involve and take into itself many accomplishments and so be fulfilled over and over. Instances of this in scriptures, we find many. That voice in Ramah, of Rachel weeping for her children which were Ephraim and Benjamin, Jer. xxxi. 15, foretold the destruction of some, and leading others into the captivity of Babylon; from whence the promise is, they should be brought again into their own border, and was then fulfilled. And yet this was verified in the slaughter of those infants in and about Bethlehem, by Herod, in our Saviour's time, where Rachel was buried. Yea, and there shall be a like ground for this lamentation a third time, at the calling of the Jews, which is yet to come; for even unto that doth the promise made then, reach. If Rachel were alive, she could not but lament for her son Ephraim and all his posterity as utterly lost; for they themselves know not themselves, nor none other in the world, where the ten tribes are, or what nation they are. She would cry out, 'Ephraim is not, he is a lost child;' yet they shall be converted, and owned by God for his pleasant child. 'There is hope,' says God, 'in thine end,' speaking of the latter day; 'Thy sons shall come into their former border,' verses 17, 18; 19, 20. Thus the destruction of Jerusalem, , prophesied of by Isaiah, chap. xxix. from ver. 1 to the 13th, for the cause there specified - verses 13, 14, 'Forasmuch as this people draw near with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid' - is applied by Christ, as a prophecy of the like superstitions and temper of the Jews' spirit in his time; so as the cause of that second destruction of Jerusalem that followed, by Titus, Mat. xv. 7, 8, 'Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.' Both which destructions of that city, did (God's providence thereby shewing the parallel that held between them), as Josephus records, fall out on the same day of the month. Thus also that prophecy of Jeremiah, chap. xvi. ver-. 14, 15, and chap. xxiii. ver. 8, 'Behold, the days come, that it shall be no more said, 'The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers;' - this was manifestly intended of, and fulfilled in, their deliverance out of Babylon; and as manifestly the same is intended of their conversion and deliverance yet to come, in the days of the gospel, out of all lands, as chap: xxiii. verses 6, 7, 8, where the same prophecy is in the same words repeated, and there undeniably applied to the times of Christ, and remains yet to be fulfilled: 'In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they

shall no more say, 'The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I have driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.' I say, it is to be fulfilled (to use Isaiah's words) a second time, Isa. xi. 11. To instance in no more examples foreign to the thing in hand, but in such as are more parallel unto that which in Haggai we have in hand (it being a prophecy of Christ's coming as a redeemer), as this also is. There is none that reads those words, Isa. lix. 28, 'And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord,' but will presently have his eyes upon Christ's first coming in the flesh to preach unto the Jews, which he did; especially, if he shall withal read Peter's sermon to the Jews of that age, speaking in the very words of that prophecy, Acts iii. 26, 'God hath sent Jesus to bless you, by turning every one of you from his iniquities.' Yea, and Jeremiah certainly, and the Jews in his days, had this first coming of the Messiah in their eye, and perhaps it only; and yet the Holy Ghost, in penning this, had a further eye upon his coming to them, as a redeemer, to convert them, in the last days. Therefore Paul guided by that Spirit, is bold to apply this as a proof of Christ's coming in his Spirit (or perhaps visible appearance, such as made to himself when converted to Christ), to convert the nation of the Jews, after their rejection, under these times of the gospel, which is yet to come; Rom. xi. ver 26, - 'All Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.' - And why should not the like hold here in the prophecy of Haggai? That although the prophet himself, and the Jews he spake it unto, had their eyes only fixed upon the first coming of Christ, and the alterations and shakings then made, yet the Holy Ghost had a further eye upon a second coming, accompanied with greater shakings both afore and after. And,

3rd. This rule must needs be acknowledged in a special manner to hold true, when there are many and several gradual accomplishments of one and the same kind of work done by degrees and parts, which are all of one sort or kind, and all at last to be cast up in one total sum, and which may be reduced to one general head that comprehends them all. In this case a prophecy may be applied to each of those performances, and may be said to be fulfilled in the first, and yet remains to be fulfilled, and still under promise in respect of a future accomplishment. And such indeed is that instance given, which upon Christ's first coming in the flesh, had an imperfect handsel, and first fruits of performance, in converting multitudes of Jews in that age; but so as to have a more full harvest in the conversion of all Israel at the last. This is undeniable in other instances; for that promise, 'Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new,' given forth by Isaiah at twice, chap. viii. 48, and chap. lxxv., hath a just accomplishment in the conversion of every sinner, as the apostle affirms, 2 Cor. v. 17, 'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;' and so is every day fulfilled in the world. And when whole nations renounce their false worship and entertain the worship and profession of Christ, it hath a more ample degree, but yet still it remains at the end, to be fulfilled in his creating the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 8, 'When the tabernacle of God is with men; and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears: from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.' And Isaiah manifestly aimed at it, Isa. lxv. 17, 18, 19, 'For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying, And this, though it had an imperfect accomplishment in Paul's time, in every true Israelite that was converted to God, who had a new heaven in the renewal of his mind, and a new earth created in his affections and outward man; yet Peter tells us, that still, in respect of the ultimate accomplishment of it, it still continues under a promise to be fulfilled: 2 Peter iii. 18, 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein

dwelleth righteousness.' And thus here, as to the point in hand, the shaking of the old heavens and earth to bring in this new, being a work that hath many parts, and pieces, and degrees, that go to make up the total of it; it comprehending the whole work of Christ's kingdom during his whole reign, from his first coming to the end; it had an accomplishment in what was done in the world in those primitive times, upon Christ's first coming. But he that should determine and end it there, in his removal of the Jewish worship, converting the nations, or the like great alterations thereupon made, should narrow that prophecy of Haggai, as much as he that should confine Isaiah's intent to be meant only of each particular believer's conversion, when it is so evidently to be enlarged to the creating of a new world, in which righteousness shall dwell, that is, rule and reign, which we look for, even that world to come, as in this epistle to the Hebrews the apostle termeth it.



Thomas Goodwin

Thomas Goodwin (1600 – 1680) was a Puritan theologian and pastor. He was a friend and confidante of Oliver Cromwell.

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