



OHBC MEMORY VERSE— WEEK #37

THIS WEEK'S VERSE: HAGGAI 2:7

“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.”

Why Haggai 2:7?

Because it continues to point us deeper into the theme of the Bible, and to the day to which all of history is moving: the great “Day of the Lord.”

From our very first memory verse from the very first Book of the Bible in our very first week of our 365 Days of Pursuit, we saw the reality of God’s statement through Peter in Acts 3:19-21: “... when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord (Second Coming); And he shall send Jesus Christ (Second Coming), which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, (Second Coming, i.e. “Day of the Lord”) which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”

In this week’s memory verse, the theme of the Bible, “the Day of the Lord,” is being spoken by the mouth of God’s holy prophet Haggai. Haggai points the people of his day, who were discouraged about the glory of the Temple they were rebuilding compared to the Temple of Solomon, to a different day, and a different Temple, and a different glory! He points them to the time of the Messiah’s Second Coming when He will establish His millennial kingdom. God spoke through Haggai: “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” (Haggai 2:7).

In the very near future, God will unleash His judgment on this world through His Son, and He will indeed “shake all nations.” It is then that “the desire of all nations shall come.” Not just the desire for “refreshing” (Acts 3:19). Not just the desire for “the restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21). But the desire of those from all nations (Matt. 28:19; Rev. 7:9) who have called upon the name of the Lord; the desire (i.e. longing) to see Him glorified (II Thess. 1:10; II Tim. 4:8)!

Is that your “desire” today? May that “desire” grow stronger and stronger as we continue to pursue God through His Word, and as we continue to hide His Word in our hearts!

DAY 181

TODAY’S READING: EZEKIEL 37-40

OVERVIEW:

The resurrection of Israel (Chapter thirty-seven); God’s Judgment against Gog (chapters thirty-eight through thirty-nine); Ezekiel’s vision of the millennial temple (chapter forty).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Chapter 37 continues a series of prophecies given to Ezekiel the night before the messenger of Ezekiel 33:21-22 arrives. God knew that Israel would faint in their hearts once Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple was burned. The word “hopeless” comes to mind. God takes Ezekiel to a valley full of dry bones. He asks if the bones can live again. It is important to realize that if the children of Israel didn’t believe in an individual resurrection (as some liberal scholars would suggest) this vision would have no meaning. Ezekiel is commanded to prophesy to the bones (37:4) and to the wind (37:9). After Ezekiel follows God’s instructions, the bones are resurrected. God explains the meaning of the vision in Ezekiel 37:11-14. These bones represent the whole house of Israel being resurrected as a nation.

The Jews were cutoff from their homeland, defeated, without hope. God gives Israel hope. He gives them His Word. Israel, as a nation, will be resurrected (Isaiah 66:8). God tells Ezekiel to join together the sticks upon which He has written a name that represents a part of Israel, and so illustrates that Israel will be one nation (37:15-19). The rest of the chapter looks forward to the millennium.

Chapters 38 and 39 tell of a northern confederacy of nations (38:6, 15) who will invade the Promised Land and wage war against Israel (38:16). The phrase “after many days” and “latter year” in Ezekiel 38:8

indicates that this prophecy is tied to the coming of Christ at the Second Advent (39:11). This confederacy then, will be led by the anti-Christ (Rev.12:1-3) and will be the recipient of God's fury and wrath (38:18-23). It will take Israel seven months to bury the dead (39:12)! God also instructs Ezekiel to speak to the carrion birds and carnivorous animals to consume the fallen flesh (Rev. 19:21). Chapter 39 ends with God's promise to never hide His face from Israel again. This refers to the beginning of the millennial kingdom.

Introduction to Ezekiel 40-48

The last nine chapters of Ezekiel, beginning with chapter 40, form an inseparable unit. Explicit details about Christ's millennial reign follow the great battle described in chapters 38 and 39. This portion of scripture provides more detail about the 1,000-year kingdom than all other Old Testament prophecies combined. In these chapters we will find a vivid description of the millennial temple and reinstated Jewish rituals and sacrifices. This portion of Ezekiel must be approached as the other thirty-nine chapters have been approached – literally. Ezekiel, who is a priest, is speaking of a literal temple and literal sacrifices that will exist in a literal future kingdom. We must be careful to understand that the reinstatement of the temple and sacrifices in no way nullifies or diminishes the finished work of Christ on the cross. Just as the sacrifices in the OT pointed to the finished work of Christ on the cross, the sacrifices in the millennium will point back to the finished work of Christ on the cross. These last nine chapters break down as follows: New Temple (40:1 - 43:12); New Worship (43:13 - 47:12); New Appointment of Land (47:13 - 48:35).

Ezekiel began with a vision of Christ at the Second Advent and ends with a vision of Christ in the millennial kingdom.

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As "the man" in Ezekiel 40:3.

DAY 182

TODAY'S READING: EZEKIEL 41-44

OVERVIEW:

Measurements of Millennial Temple (chapter forty-one); measurements of the temple chambers (chapter forty-two); God's glory returns to the temple (chapter forty-three); the priests (chapter forty-four).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Chapters 41 and 42 describe the specific measurements of the temple.

It is Christ alone, not Ezekiel, who enters the most holy place of the temple (41:3-4). This serves as a reminder that it was Christ alone who entered the most holy place to make atonement for our sin (Heb. 9:8, 12, 10:19).

The side chambers of the temple (41:5-11) will be the priest's quarters. What a reminder that as the priesthood of believers (1 Peter 2:5), our lives should be given wholly to offering up spiritual sacrifices, our own lives (Rom.12:1-2).

The galleries mentioned in Ezekiel 41:15-20 were buildings having decorations described as palm trees and cherubim. Between the palm trees was a cherub with two faces, the face of a man and the face of a lion. These faces might possibly represent the humanity and kingship of the Messiah.

The altar of incense is described in Ezekiel 41:21-26 (Ex. 30:1-3). The incense represents the prayers of God's people (Psa. 141:2).

Note that there is no reference to the Ark of the Covenant in the furnishings of the millennial temple. This is a direct fulfillment of Jeremiah 3:16-17. There is no longer a need for the Ark as a type of Christ, as it is Christ who sits physically on the throne during the millennium.

Chapter 42 contains specific measurements of the court temple chambers (42:1-12), the use of the chambers by the priests (42:13-14), and the measurement of the outer wall and entire complex (42:15-20). The walls will be approximately one mile on each side, which means that this temple will not fit on

the current Mount Moriah (where Solomon's temple stood). This will require a "modification" of the land. The prophet Zechariah spoke about this change in Zechariah 14:9-11.

Chapter 43 must be understood in the context of Ezekiel's previous prophecy. Earlier in the book, we saw that God's glory had departed from the temple (10:19, 11:23). This chapter speaks of God's glory returning to a future physical temple (43:1-5). As Christians, we should be encouraged by God's desire to once again fill a Jewish temple with His glory. However, for us the prophecy only pictures what has already happened in our life. God has always desired a place for His glory to dwell. When THE TEMPLE (Christ's body) was destroyed (John 2:19), it made it possible for our bodies to become God's temple (I Cor. 6:19)! God allowed Satan to destroy one temple, and God in turn filled this world with His temples. We are the place where God's glory now resides.

This should also serve as a warning to us. The enemy hated Solomon's temple (burned by Babylon), hated Zerubbabel's /Herod's temple (burned by Rome), hated Christ (crucified by Rome), and now hates us. This is a war for glory! We are now the target on planet earth. Satan wants to destroy our lives. There may even be times when he is successful. However, just as God's glory returned to a physical temple, God can take lives that the enemy has destroyed and restore them for His glory. Unlike the physical temples of the Old Testament, however, God never leaves us!

Chapter 44 deals with regulations for the priests who will serve in the millennial temple. Once again, as the priesthood of believers, we will find numerous pictures of how we should minister in our priesthood.

It should be noted that "the prince" described in Ezekiel 44:3 is allowed to enter through the vestibule/porch of the eastern gate (the same gate through which the Messiah has entered). This prince cannot be the Messiah as he offers a sacrifice for his own sin (45:22). This prince is referred to at least fourteen times in chapters 44-47. We cannot be sure as to the identity of this prince. Most likely, he is a descendant of David. Some students of the scripture believe he may even be David himself.

Is there sin in the millennium? Sometimes this can be a confusing concept. We must remember that at the end of the millennium there will be another rebellion against God (Rev. 20:7-9). There will be those who came through the tribulation and those who are born during the millennium who will still reject Christ. Why? For the same reason people reject Christ today. They will not submit to His Lordship. As believers, we will have received our glorified bodies and will no longer struggle with sin— Hallelujah!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the One who enters the "most Holy place" – Ezekiel 41:3-4 (Hebrews 9:8, 12)

DAY 183

TODAY'S READING: EZEKIEL 45-48

OVERVIEW:

The allotment of land for the priests and the Temple (chapter forty-five); offerings and sacrifices during the millennium (chapter forty-six); the waters of the land healed and the land divided (chapters forty-seven through forty-eight).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Chapter 45 begins with an allotment of land to be offered unto the Lord during the millennium (45:1-8). This portion of land will cover a territory of about eight square miles. A rectangle of 25,000 x 10,000 cubits in the middle will be for the Temple; and set aside for the priests. A similar rectangle north of it will be for the Levites. On the south, a rectangle of 25,000 x 5,000 cubits will be reserved for the city itself.

The Temple will be the focal point of the land, surrounded by an area for the priests on the east and west, an area for the Levites on the north, with the city located to the south. An area for the prince (discussed in yesterday's reading) will exist outside the domain of the priests.

After giving the layout of the land, Ezekiel admonishes the priests of his day (45:9-12) to execute judgment and justice and stop taking advantage of the people. The conduct to which the priests had grown accustomed will not be tolerated during the millennium.

Ezekiel 45:13-17 records the offerings Israel will give to the prince. The prince in turn will make provision for the public sacrifices for worship. The rest of the chapter (45:18-20) records the institution of a new festival to start the “new year” with an emphasis on holiness and the reinstatement of the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles (45:21-25). The offerings in the millennial Temple will be much richer and more abundant than those under the law.

Chapter 46 deals with the offerings and the sacrifices that will be offered during the millennium. Here we learn that the Sabbath will be reinstated (46:1). The Sabbath, an entirely Jewish day, was never intended to be kept by anyone other than a Jew. We see in this chapter that the context of these sacrifices and offerings will once again be entirely Jewish. On the Sabbath, the prince will enter through the eastern gate of the inner court to lead the children of Israel in worship (46:12).

Ezekiel 46:16-17 teaches that if the prince gives an inheritance to his sons it is permanent, but a gift to a servant lasts only to the year of Jubilee. What a beautiful picture. Praise God that His prince (Christ) deals with us as sons and not as servants (Rom. 8:14)!

Chapter 47 begins with Ezekiel being escorted again to the door of the Temple (47:1). The waters issue forth from the entrance to the Temple. This symbolizes that all blessing flows from the presence of the Lord. God then heals the waters and transforms the Dead Sea, which could not formally support life, into a living sea of fresh water (47:6-12). What a picture of the transforming power of God. That which could not support life is now made to support life.

The rest of this chapter (47:13-23) and chapter 48 deal with the dividing of the land. It should be noted that the stranger (the “non Jews”) living during the millennium will not be excluded (47:21-23). The Mosaic Law did not permit the stranger to acquire land, as it is granted here. The right is extended to those who will settle permanently in the land of promise, having children there. This further reminds us that there will be children born during the millennium.

The final chapter concerns the distribution of the Promised Land for the millennial age. All the tribal portions extend across the breadth of the land. All the tribes are west of the Jordan. A central tract of land is separated for the Temple, for the city, and for the prince’s land (discussed in chapter 45).

Dan is the first tribe mentioned. Dan is omitted during the tribulation (Rev. 7). The omission during the tribulation is probably due to Dan’s idolatry. However, here in the millennium Dan is restored. That is what God is all about – grace! He restores what has been lost! He repairs what has been broken! God sees past our failures! God sees our restoration!

The Book of Ezekiel began with much of Israel in exile. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the world. Over the course of Ezekiel’s life the glory of the LORD departed from the Temple, and the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed and burned. However, in these last nine chapters, God has given Ezekiel a glimpse of Israel’s future. The Book ends (48:35) with a new city, and the name of that city is “The LORD is there”!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As waters of life coming forth from the presence of God – Eze. 47:1 (John 4:14).

*Tomorrow we will look at the life of a man that was close to the same age as Ezekiel who also prophesied during Israel’s exile.

DAY 184

TODAY’S READING: DANIEL 1-3

OVERVIEW:

Daniel and his friends taken captive to Babylon away from their families; Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and Daniel’s interpretation; The image of gold erected by Nebuchadnezzar and the refusal of Daniel’s three friends to bow down and worship it.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Since the Jews had refused to repent and obey the Lord, the Babylonian army came in and conquered their land just as the prophet Jeremiah had warned! Daniel and his three friends (all teenagers at the

time) were snatched from their homes in Jerusalem, and taken to Babylon since they were all princes and belonged to the royal family (1:3). It was the custom at the time to take the best of the youth to Babylon to be trained in the king's court. The king's goal, of course, was to conform them to the ways of Babylon. This conforming process involved a new home, new knowledge, new diets, and new names. Don't miss the fact that Satan's strategy is no different today than it was then. He is bent on conforming God's people to this world (Rom. 12:1-2)! Daniel and his friends, however, purposed in their heart that they would not defile themselves with the king's meat (1:8). They dared to stand for what they believed to be true and right, even though it meant doing so at the risk of their own lives. Risking their own lives was one thing, but it also meant risking the life of Melzar, the one the king had appointed to control the diets of the Hebrew children. He understood that if it would become evident by their physical appearance that they were not following the king's directions; it would mean his neck as well as theirs! Daniel believed God would honor their refusal to eat the king's meat, and asked Melzar, in whom he had found favor, for a 10 day trial of simply eating pulse (vegetables) and water to prove that God would step up on their behalf. God did indeed step up, as their countenance was much healthier looking than the others who were eating according to the king's prescribed diet. So often we talk about the law of sowing and reaping from a negative standpoint (Gal. 6:8). This happens to be a positive example of the principle. Because of the great faith and trust these young men sowed at this point in their life, they reaped God's promotion and protection in the worldly kingdom of Babylon throughout the remainder of their lives!

In chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar has a dream and demands that the wise men not only interpret it, but to actually tell him what the dream was about. None were up to the task, so Nebuchadnezzar ordered all of the so-called wise men to be slain. At the last minute, however, God reveals the dream and its interpretation to Daniel, so he proceeds to tell the king, sparing the lives of the wise men from certain death. Nebuchadnezzar is quite impressed and pleased with Daniel, and to show his appreciation, promotes Daniel and his three friends to key positions of authority in his kingdom. It should be noted that the dream that Daniel interpreted was actually an outline of world history. It describes the kingdoms and governments that would rule the world beginning with Babylon at that time, all the way up to this present day. In fact, without the revelation of the prophecies in the Book of Daniel, it would be impossible to interpret the Book of Revelation. The two books go hand in hand (I Cor. 2:13).

Chapter 3 takes place approximately 20 years after Nebuchadnezzar's dream. While Nebuchadnezzar had acknowledged that Jehovah God is the "God of gods, and a LORD of kings" (2:47), he evidently suffered a major lapse in memory in that 20 year period. In this chapter he sets up a golden image of himself, requiring every person in the entire kingdom to bow before it and worship it. Obviously, this poses a major problem for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Babylonian names of Daniel's three Hebrew friends). If they were so surrendered to God's Word that they refused to eat the king's meat, they certainly would have no part in bowing down before the king's image! (Daniel must have been away from the kingdom at the time the image was set up, because his uncompromising and godly character most certainly proves that he would have been among those who refused to bow down to the image!) Their refusal to bow to his golden image caused Nebuchadnezzar to have them cast into the fiery furnace. In the midst of the furnace, there is an incredible pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, the fourth man in the fire, who protected them, not only from the flames, but even the very smell of smoke! Nebuchadnezzar was reminded once again of the power of Jehovah God, and made a decree stating that it was illegal for anyone to speak against Him! He also promoted these three men in his kingdom.

There is an overarching biblical truth that we learn from today's reading. God promises all of us three things:

- 1) Persecution (I Peter 4:12-19; Phil. 1:29)
- 2) Preservation (Isa. 43:2; Psalm 23; Eph. 1:12-14)
- 3) Promotion (I Peter 5:10)

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As THE STONE – Dan. 2:35, 45; Jesus is the chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20, I Pet. 2:6-7, and Rom. 9:31-33).

DAY 185

TODAY'S READING: DANIEL 4-6

OVERVIEW:

Nebuchadnezzar's tree dream and Daniel's interpretation; Belshazzar (grandson of Nebuchadnezzar) and the handwriting of God on the wall; Daniel and the lion's den.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

In chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar once again has a dream. This time the dream was about a huge tree overshadowing the entire earth that was ordered to be cut down by an angelic voice. Once again the king summoned his wise men to no avail, for they could not interpret the dream. The king then called on Daniel, the man of God, who proceeded to tell the king the interpretation, but not in a careless fashion, for this dream dealt with the King's personal future. The explanation of the dream is not difficult. The tree represented Nebuchadnezzar and his mighty kingdom, and this tree must be cut down because Nebuchadnezzar did not give God the glory even after all that he had seen God do (see Dan. 1-3). But not only would Nebuchadnezzar lose his position, he would have to live like a beast for seven years until God would once again restore the throne back to him. God's reason for doing this was to teach Nebuchadnezzar humility. Yet after Daniel revealed this interpretation to the king, he still did not repent of his boasting ways, so the dream was realized in Nebuchadnezzar's life. For seven years he lived like a beast until verse 34 when "he lifted up his eyes unto heaven ... and blessed the most high". This chapter is essentially the story of Nebuchadnezzar's conversion! Verse 37 should be a warning to all of us, for "those that walk in pride [God] is able to abase". This chapter also happens to be a fore view of what will happen to the nations in the latter days. Just about the time that they will be boasting of their greatness and glory, God will send seven years of awful judgment upon them and bring them low. Then, at the end of the tribulation period, Christ will return to earth and establish His kingdom. The nations that have trusted Him will enter into the glorious kingdom; the others will be cast out.

In chapter 5, Belshazzar is now king, and Daniel is about 80 years old. Belshazzar had obviously not been impressed with his grandfather's decision to worship the one true God of heaven, for he was throwing a party in honor of one of the Babylonian gods! Yet he was not content to just drink wine to his gods, he wanted to blaspheme the God of the Jews (and the whole earth) as well. So he had the sacred temple vessels brought in to be used at this idolatrous, blasphemous feast (5:3-4). This is when a hand appeared and wrote on the wall causing Belshazzar to shake in fear (vs. 6). As usual, the king's experts could not explain this handwriting on the wall and this made the king even more concerned (vs. 9). The queen had to tell Belshazzar about a man named Daniel who most certainly could help him with the interpretation of the writing. Belshazzar obviously did not know him or his God! Once again, Daniel gives the king the interpretation ... "numbered, weighed, divided! ". Belshazzar's days were numbered and his time was up; he had been weighed on God's scales and found wanting; now his kingdom would be taken from him and divided by the Medes and Persians. Did Belshazzar believe Daniel? There is no evidence of repentance or concern on his part. He kept his promise to Daniel and made him third ruler as though his kingdom would continue forever! Yet that same night, Belshazzar was slain and the Medes and Persians took the kingdom just as God had said (5:30-31)!

Chapter 6 deals with a day in the life of the Prime Minister of the Medo-Persian Empire...Daniel. God had honored Daniel's faithfulness through many different kings and kingdoms; but the wicked hate the righteous (ever since Cain and Abel), and that fact is proven again by the events in this chapter. The other leaders of the land conspire against Daniel and get the king to pass law prohibiting any man from petitioning any God or man, save the king, for 30 days. This, of course, was a trap, for they knew Daniel prayed without ceasing to his God (6:10). After hearing of this new law, Daniel continues to do what he had always done... pray. For this, the king was forced to cast Daniel into the lion's den against his own wishes, for he loved Daniel (6:14)! The law could not be changed, even by the king himself (6:15). So, Daniel was placed into the lion's den and King Darius fasted and did not sleep the whole night long. When morning came, he ran to the den of lions crying out Daniel's name. Sure enough, God delivered Daniel and the king was very glad (6:23). The men that accused Daniel were cast into the lion's den and killed. Daniel went on to prosper throughout the reign of Darius and Cyrus (6:28).

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As GOD'S ANGEL sent to shut the lion's mouths – Dan. 6:22. (Rev. 20:3; I Pet. 1:8; Heb. 11:33).