

Haggai Chapter 2

Verses 1-9

With building operations in full swing, the LORD gave a strong message of encouragement, especially to the elderly among them who had seen Solomon's temple.

Though the temple of Solomon was of greater magnificence, the LORD urged the people to be courageous, assuring them of His presence (verse 4), His faithfulness to His covenant promises (verse 5), and promises of a greater, more glorious temple in the future (verses 6-9).

Verses 1-2

The prophet's second message is dated "in the seventh month," in the one and twentieth day of the month.

About a month and a half after his receipt of the first message (1:1), and almost a month after the actual building of the temple had begun (1:15).

Haggai 2:1 "In the seventh [month], in the one and twentieth [day] of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai, saying,"

"Seventh month ... one and twentieth day":

This day in the month of Tishri (corresponds to October 17, 520 B.C.; Leviticus 23:39-44), indicates that this was the final day of the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles.

A feast to celebrate God's provision for Israel during her 40 years of wilderness wandering and give thanks for a bountiful harvest.

On this occasion the LORD gave Haggai the third message.

This is about the same month as our September, or October.

The 21st would be the last of the feast of tabernacles.

The harvest took place at this time.

Leviticus 23:34 "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month [shall be] the feast of tabernacles [for] seven days unto the LORD."

Harvest time was generally a time of great joy.

Haggai 2:2 "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying,"

The first message was directed toward the leaders; Zerubbabel and Joshua (see notes on 1:1).

Here the prophet includes the remainder of the exiles who returned from Babylon.

This is a separate message (from that in chapter 1).

Again, this message is to the governor, high priest, and to the people.

Matthew 1:12 "And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zerubbabel;"

Haggai 2:3 "Who [is] left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? [is it] not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?"

“You that saw”:

Some remained, perhaps even Haggai, who had seen the temple of Solomon before its destruction (Ezra 3:12-13).

With 3 rhetorical questions, the LORD through His prophet Haggi drew attention to the fact that this temple was inferior to Solomon’s temple (Ezra 3:8-13), which caused many to be discouraged by its lack of splendor.

The magnificent temple in Solomon's time was far above anything else in the world at that time. The wealth in silver and gold in the temple was like the wealth of an entire country today.

The wood used was the cedar of Lebanon.

These people, who had been in captivity, could not amass such great wealth.

It would have been unusual for anyone living to have seen it, because it had been destroyed about 70 years before.

It is possible; some very old person could have lived during that time.

We do know that in the work of the foundation, some of the older people wept at this new foundation.

It appears, they were saddened by the fact they could not build the wonderful temple that Solomon had built.

Haggai 2:4 "Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I [am] with you, saith the LORD of hosts:"

“Be strong”:

To counteract the discouragement, the LORD repeated the command to “be strong” and to “work,” assuring them of God’s presence.

This was the second reminder from the LORD, “I am with you” (Hag. 1:13).

This is encouragement from God.

God is not worried about the expensive items of the temple.

God is more interested in their hearts desiring to build the temple.

God is pleased with their effort.

God is with them, and will help them.

They have shown faith in God by starting the construction.

All He asks is their loyalty, and their love.

He does not need, or want, wealth.

Everything on, and in, the earth belongs to Him already.

God's approval gives them strength to go on.

Haggai 2:5 "[According to] the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not."

Spoken at the close of the feast commemorating God’s provision during the wilderness wanderings, His covenant commitment and the promise that His Spirit would be with them as “when you came out of Egypt” would be most reassuring (1445 B.C.).

He had not forgotten them over the last 9 centuries (Exodus 33:14).

“My Spirit”:

The third Person of the Triune Godhead (Num. 11:16-17).

Exodus 29:46 “And they shall know that I [am] the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I [am] the LORD their God.”

If they were faithful and kept the commandments of God, God would bless them abundantly.

If they did not obey God then curses would come upon them.

The building of this temple showed they wanted God to be their God.

He will bless them for their love of Him.

He will be their God, and dwell with them.

The following Scripture is what God wanted all along.

Revelation 21:3 "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, 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."

Verses 6-7

"I will shake":

The shaking of the cosmic bodies and the nations goes beyond the historical removal of kingdoms and the establishment of others, such as the defeat of Persia by Greece (Dan. 7).

Rather, the text looks to the cataclysm in the universe described in Revelation (chapters 6-19), the subjugation of the nations by the Messiah, and the setting up of His kingdom which will never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44; 7:27; Zechariah 14:16-21; Matthew 25:32; Luke 21:26; Hebrews 12:26; Rev. 19:19-21).

Haggai 2:6 "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];"

For the further encouragement of the builders of the temple, they are told, from the LORD of hosts that in a little time, when such circumstances should meet as are here pointed at, the Messiah should come, and appear in this house, giving it a greater glory than even Solomon's temple had.

For that this passage is to be understood of the Messiah and his times is clear from the apostle's application of it, (Heb. 12:25).

Even the ancient Jews themselves understood it of the Messiah.

Yet once, or, "once more", as the apostle in the above place quotes which suggests that the LORD had before done something of the kind, that follows.

Shaking the heavens, etc. as at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.

And would do the same again; and more abundantly in the times of the Gospel, or of the Messiah.

Bishop Chandler renders the words, "after one kingdom (the Grecian), it is a little while; (or after that), I will shake all the heavens", etc.

And though it was five hundred years from this prophecy to the incarnation of Christ: yet this was but a little while with God, with whom a thousand years are as one day.

And indeed with men it was but a short time, when compared with the first promise of his coming at the beginning of the world.

Or with the shaking of the earth at the giving of the law, soon after Israel came out of Egypt.

"And I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land":

Which either intends the changes and revolutions made in the several kingdoms and nations of the world, between this prophecy and the coming of Christ.

Which soon began to take place.

For the Persian monarchy, now flourishing, was quickly shook and subdued by the Grecians.

And in a little time the Grecian monarchy was destroyed by the Romans.

I believe the Scripture above has jumped over, until the time when Jesus will destroy the evil of all nations, and He will reign in Jerusalem as King.

Just before Jesus sets up His kingdom, there will be a terrible calamity upon the earth.

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:"

In God's time table of all of eternity, it was but a little time.

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."

"Desire of all nations":

While some view the phrase as referring to Jerusalem (e.g., Ezra 6:3-9), it seems preferable to see a reference here to the Messiah.

The Deliverer for whom all the nations ultimately long.

"I will fill this house with glory":

This is no Scripture to indicate that God's glory ever did come to Zerubbabel's temple, as the first temple was filled with the Shekinah glory (1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chron. 5:13-14).

However, His glory will fill the millennial temple (Ezek. 43:5).

This glorification cannot refer to Christ's physical presence in Herod's temple, for the events (of verses 6-9), cannot be accounted for historically.

The context speaks of the establishment of His earthly, Davidic, millennial kingdom and His presence in the temple during that kingdom.

The temple in Jerusalem will be restored to its greatness at that time.

The nations of the world had been worshipping false gods.

God will shake them to the point; they will give up the worship of false gods that cannot help them.

Luke 21:10-11 "Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:" "And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."

Read the rest of this chapter (in Luke), to get the full impact.

They will turn to the One, True, Living God who can help them.

The glory of God will rest in the temple in Jerusalem.

God wins the victory over the entire world system.

Jesus will reign as King of kings.

Haggai 2:8 "The silver [is] mine, and the gold [is] mine, saith the LORD of hosts."

"Silver ... gold":

Economically destitute, the people were reassured that He is the possessor of all things (Psalm 50:12).

Everything we know belongs to God.

"Silver" spiritually means redemption, and "gold" means the purity of God.

From the physical and the spiritual standpoint, silver and gold belong to God.

Haggai 2:9 "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."

“The glory of this latter house”:

The Jews viewed the temple in Jerusalem as one temple existing in different forms at different times.

The rebuilt temple was considered a continuation of Solomon’s temple (verse 3).

However, the eschatological glory of the millennial temple, i.e., the latter temple, will far surpass even the grandeur of Solomon’s temple (the former temple; see Ezekiel chapters 40-48 for the detailed description of the millennial temple).

This refers to Christ’s physical presence in the second temple (greatly modified by Herod).

Ezekiel (chapters 10 and 11), had earlier witnessed the departure of God’s glory from Solomon’s temple, prior to its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar.

Although the builders of the second temple prayed for the Shekinah glory to return, there is no record that it ever did.

This prophecy would be fulfilled only in the return of that glory in the embodiment of Jesus Christ.

Of whom His disciples said, “and we beheld his glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father” (John 1:14).

“I will give peace”:

This peace is not limited to that peace which He gives to believers (Rom. 5:1), but looks ahead to that ultimate peace when He returns to rule as the Prince of Peace upon the throne of David in Jerusalem (Isa. 9:6-7; Zech. 6:13; Acts 2:30).

This is saying that the latter house will be more glorious than the one Solomon had built.

One greater than Solomon will reign, Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the King of peace, and He brings perfect peace to all the earth.

2 Thessalonians 3:16 "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means.

The Lord [be] with you all."

The glory of the Lord filled Solomon's temple, when he dedicated it to God.

The glory that will be in this temple is the continual presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 10-19

The fourth of Haggai occurred 2 months after the third, on the 24th day of the month of Chislev (corresponding to Dec. 18, 520 B.C.).

Only one month earlier, Zechariah began his prophetic ministry (Zech. 1:1).

The message sought to demonstrate that while their disobedience caused God's blessings to be withheld, their obedience would cause His blessings to be released.

Verses 10-11

The prophet's third message was a message of affirmation.

This message came about two months after the message of 2:1-9).

Haggai 2:10 "In the four and twentieth [day] of the ninth [month], in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,"

"In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month":

The month Chisleu, which answers to part of November, and part of December: this was two months and three days after the former discourse or prophecy, and just three months from the time the Jews began to work in the house of the LORD (Haggai 1:14).

"In the second year of Darius":

The same year that all the former discourses and prophecies were delivered in.

"Came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet":

For what he delivered was not his own, but from the LORD; he was only his minister and messenger.

The Vulgate Latin version, and so Munster, render it, "unto Haggai the prophet".

And indeed, what is said following seems to be directed to him, and he is the only person that put the questions directed to.

This is 2 months and 3 days later than the last message.

It is 3 months after they began to build on the temple.

God is now, giving Haggai a new message to speak.

Verses 11-14

To provide an analogy or object lesson for the people, two questions were asked of the priest relative to ceremonial law.

The first question was intended to show that ceremonial cleanness cannot be transferred (verse 12), while the second question showed that ceremonial uncleanness can be transferred (verse 13).

Haggai then applied the lesson (verse 14).

Even though the people had been bringing their offering which neglecting the rebuilding of the temple, their offerings had not been acceptable.

Their sin had caused their sacrifices to be contaminated and ineffectual.

And their good works and their offerings, could not transmit cleanness.

In other words, sin is contagious, righteousness is not (1 Sam. 15:22; Hosea 6:6).

Haggai 2:11 "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests [concerning] the law, saying,"

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts":

To Haggai the prophet.

"Ask now the priests concerning the law":

Whose business it was to understand it, and teach it, and to answer questions, and resolve doubts concerning it.

Not of their own heads, and according to their fancies, will, and pleasure; but according to the rules and instructions given in the word of God.

And as this was their office, they were the proper persons to apply to.

And Haggai, though a prophet, is sent to the priests to propose questions to them.

Though it may be not so much for his own information as it was for the conviction of the priests of their impurity, out of their own mouths, and of the people by them.

"Saying":

Putting the following questions to them.

One of the things the priests did was instruct the people in the law.

To instruct the law, they must be very familiar with the law.

This is the LORD sending Haggai to ask the priest the question.

Verses 12-13

The people were to ask the priests two questions and, as a result, would learn that holiness is not communicable (verse 12), while unholiness is communicable (verse 13).

The Mosaic system clearly taught that ceremonial cleanness was not transferable from one person or things to another.

But ceremonial uncleanness was transferable (Lev. 6:18; 22:4-6; Num. 19:11).

Haggai 2:12 "If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No."

"If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment":

Or "carry" it; from one place to another in his pockets or bags, which were in the skirts of his garments.

This is to be understood of the flesh of creatures offered in sacrifice, which were sanctified or separated for holy use.

Part of which belonged to the priests, who might carry it in their pockets to the proper place of eating it.

"And with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat":

Which were not holy, and not separated for holy use, but were common meats and drinks.

Now the question upon this is:

"Shall it be holy?"

That is, if either of those common things were touched by the skirt, in the pockets of which the holy flesh were carried, whether they were made holy by such a touch, and no more remained common or profane?

"And the priests answered and said, No":

They were not sanctified; for though the garment itself was sanctified thereby, and might not be employed in common use till washed, (Leviticus 6:27) yet a garment so touched could not convey holiness to whatsoever that touched, or that touched it.

This has to do with passing on holiness.

The priest, in this case, possessed the holiness in himself, but it did not mean that he could pass it on to someone else.

This is like being saved.

The person who is saved becomes a child of God.

That does not mean that their children will necessarily be saved.

The child of the saved one must go to God for himself.

Each person has to receive directly from God himself.

Just because you are a Christian, does not mean you automatically save those around you.

You may touch them, as this garment did these other elements.

To receive God's holiness for themselves, they must reach out and touch God.

The holiness of the nation could not pass to others around them, just by contact.

Haggai 2:13 "Then said Haggai, If [one that is] unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean."

Haggai is ordered to go and put two questions to the priests.

"Then said Haggai":

To the priests; having nothing to object to their answer; but being satisfied with it, he puts another question.

"If one that is unclean by a dead body":

By the touch of it (Numbers 19:11).

"Touch any of these, shall it be unclean?"

That is, if such an impure person, who was so in a ceremonial sense, should touch any of the above things, bread, pottage, wine, or oil, or any meat, would not they become unclean thereby, and so not fit for use?

"And the priests answered and said, it shall be unclean":

Which was rightly answered; for whatsoever such an unclean person touched was unclean, according to the law (Lev. 19:22).

Pollution is more easily and more extensively conveyed than holiness.

This seems like a contradiction, but it is not.

Whatever uncleanness the nation had, would affect all the people.

They had been disobedient to God, when they did not build the temple.

Haggai 2:14 "Then answered Haggai, and said, So [is] this people, and so [is] this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so [is] every work of their hands; and that which they offer there [is] unclean."

"Then answered Haggai, and said":

To the priests, and before the people; and made an application of these things to them, which was the thing in view in putting the questions.

"So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD":

Not only the people that were present and at work at the temple, but those that were absent.

Even the whole body of the people; who, though they were pure in their own eyes, yet were not so before the LORD.

Who knew their hearts, and the spring of all their actions; what were their ends and views in all they did.

As a garment carrying in it holy flesh could not sanctify other things touched by it that were common and profane, but left them as they were.

So their ritual devotions, and externally holy actions, did not and could not sanctify their impure hearts, but left them as unclean as before.

Nor did they sanctify their common mercies, their bread, pottage, wine, and oil. And, on the other hand, as an impure person made everything impure he touched; so they, being impure in heart, all their actions, even their religious ones, were impure also, as follows.

"And so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean":

Pointing at the altar, which they had built, and offered sacrifice on ever since they came out of Babylon, though the temple was not yet built, (Ezra 3:3).

But all their outward religious services, and all the sacrifices they offered up, were in the LORD's account impure and abominable, as well as themselves.

Coming from an unsanctified heart, and offered up with unclean hands, and without repentance towards God, and faith in Christ.

And living in other respects in disobedience to God, and especially while they neglected the building of the temple.

Satisfying themselves with offering sacrifices on the altar, when the house of God lay desolate.

Which is the principal thing respected.

The people were not pleasing to God, when they did not build the temple.

The crops, they planted during that time of disobedience, would not produce.

God would not bless them in their disobedience.

They got about half the amount of production out of their crops that they would have, had they been building the temple.

As far as God was concerned, they were unclean, because they had not sought God first.

To obey God is better than sacrifice.

Their crops would not produce, until they obeyed God.

Verses 15-18

The LORD called the people to again consider their situation prior to the resumption of the temple building.

In those days, the farmer found less than expected (Hag. 1:6, 9-11).

Haggai 2:15 "And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:"

"And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward":

This being their case, and they so polluted with sin, particularly through their neglect of building the temple.

They are most earnestly and importunately entreated to "lay" it "to their hearts".

To ponder it in their minds, and thoroughly consider how it had fared with them from this twenty fourth day of the ninth month.

In which the prophet was sent unto them to encourage them in their work, and upwards or backwards, for some years past.

"From before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD":

The foundation of the temple was laid quickly after the Jews returned from Babylon, upon the proclamation of Cyrus (Ezra 3:10).

But, through difficulties and discouragements they met with, they desisted from the work, and went no further.

A stone was not laid upon it.

Or, as the Targum, a row, or course upon course, until this time.

And now, all the intermediate space of time between the first laying the foundation of the temple; and their present going to work upon it.

The prophet would have them take particular notice of; how it had been with them, as to their outward circumstances.

Whereby it would appear, they had sinned, and the LORD had been offended with them.

From the moment the first stone was placed toward building the temple, their crops would be blessed.

God blesses them, because they have begun, in obedience to Him, to build the temple.

God would not multiply the crop that was produced in their disobedience, but would bless their next crop, since they are now obedient.

Haggai 2:16 "Since those [days] were, when [one] came to a heap of twenty [measures], there were [but] ten: when [one] came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty [vessels] out of the press, there were [but] twenty."

"Since those days were":

From the time the foundation of the temple was laid, unto the time they began to work again, which was a space of about fifteen or sixteen years.

"When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten":

When the farmer having gathered in his corn, and who was generally a good judge of what it would yield, came to a heap of it on his corn floor, either of sheaves not threshed, or grain not winnowed.

And expected it would have produced at least twenty measures, seahs, or bushels; afterward it was threshed and winnowed, to his great disappointment he had but ten out of it.

There were so much straw and chaff, and so little grain.

Or when he came to a heap of grain, wheat, or barley, in his granary, where he thought he should have twenty bushels of it.

But when he had measured it, proved but ten; being either stolen by thieves, or eaten by vermin; rather the latter.

"When one came to the wine vat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty".

By the quantity of grapes which he put into the press to tread and squeeze, he expected to have had fifty measures, or baths, or hogsheads of wine.

But instead of that, had but twenty.

The bunches were so thin, or the berries so bad: there was a greater decrease and deficiency in the wine than in the grain.

"Ten ... twenty":

Between 50-60 percent of the expected harvest had been lost.

This is speaking of the production of their crops before they began the temple.

They had not been cut off completely, but they had not been blessed.

They had barely enough to make it.

Their crops produced no more than half what they had anticipated.

This is chastisement from God.

Haggai 2:17 "I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labors of your hands; yet ye [turned] not to me, saith the LORD."

"I smote you with blasting":

That is, their fields and vineyards, with burning winds, which consumed them; with blights by east winds.

This shows the reason of their disappointment, and that it was from the LORD, and for their sins, by way of chastisement and correction.

"And with mildew":

A kind of clammy dew, which corrupts and destroys the fruits of the earth; and is a kind of jaundice to them, as the word signifies (see Amos 4:9).

"And with hail":

Which battered down the corn and the vines, and broke them to pieces (see Exodus 9:25).

"In all the labors of your hands":

In the corn they sowed, and in the vines they planted.

"Yet ye turned not to me, saith the LORD":

Did not consider their evil ways as the cause of all this; nor repent of them, and turn from them to the LORD.

To his worship, as the Targum; or to the building of his house, the thing chiefly complained of.

Afflictions, unless sanctified, have no effect upon men to turn them from their sins to the LORD.

All of the problems they had, originated with God.

He was trying to get them to repent, and obey His commands.

He was trying to make them realize their error.

Haggai 2:18 "Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth [month, even] from the day that the foundation of the LORD'S temple was laid, consider [it]."

"Consider now from this day and upward":

Or forward; for time to come, as the Vulgate Latin version.

"From the four and twentieth day of the ninth month":

Before observed (Hag. 2:10).

"Even from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider it":

Not from the time it was first laid after their return upon the proclamation of Cyrus, but from the time they began to clear that foundation, and to build upon it.

And which having lain so long neglected, the renewal of it is represented as a fresh laying of it.

Now the prophet, as he had directed them to consider what adversity and calamities had attended them from the time of their neglect unto this time; so he would have them particularly observe what blessings they would enjoy from here going forward.

By which it would appear how pleasing it was to the LORD that they had begun and were going on with the building.

He wants them to take special note of the day they began work on the temple.

From that moment on, God would bless them in everything they did.

They would not feel the blessings for a while, but the blessings began on that day.

Crops take a while to produce.

Their next crop would be bountiful.

He wants them to remember the blessings came with their obedience to Him.

He says it more than once, to impress on them the connection between obedience to Him, and their being blessed.

Haggai 2:19 "Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless [you]."

"From this day will I bless you":

As a result of their obedience, God promised to bless them from that day forth (verse 10).

It is as if God blesses each seed.

It would be as if some super growth product had been applied.

It had.

It was called blessings from God.

Verses 20-23

The fifth message to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah (verse 20), came on the same day as the fourth, and he returned to the theme (of verses 6-9), and the millennial reign of the Messiah.

Once again, it depicted the overthrow of the kingdoms of the world and the establishment of the messianic kingdom (Dan. 2:44; 7:27).

Verses 20-21a

The prophet's fourth message, a message of anticipation, comes on the same date as the previous one.

As the events predicted did not transpire historically, the promise pertains to the royal line through who the Messiah would come.

It looked to the ultimate day when Messiah reigns on earth (Psalm 2; Revelation chapters 19 and 20).

Haggai 2:20 "And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth [day] of the month, saying,"

"And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai":

Or a "second" time, even on the same day as the former.

"In the four and twentieth day of the month":

Of the ninth month Chisleu (Hag. 2:10).

“Saying”:

As follows:

This is another separate time, when God spoke through Haggai.

This is on the same day as the last, but with a separate message.

Verses 21b–23

“Signet” ring:

This ring was used by the owner for the signing of letters and official documents.

It was a mark of such honor and of authority, as Zerubbabel’s ministry was to bear.

He would carry with him the authority of the LORD, and would represent Him.

Haggai 2:21 'Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth;'

"Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah":

The former discourse or prophecy chiefly related to the people, for their encouragement in building.

This is directed to the prince over them, to support him under all the changes and revolutions made in the world.

That he should be regarded by the LORD in a very tender manner, and his government continued, as a type of Christ and his kingdom.

"Saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth":

Make great commotions, changes, and revolutions in the world, by wars, and otherwise.

The Persian kingdom being subdued by the Grecian; the Grecian by the Romans; the Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals; and the antichristian states, both Papal and Mahometan.

By the vials of God's wrath poured out upon them, by means of Christian princes.

Such revolutions are often designed by the shaking of the heavens, especially by earthquakes in the book of the Revelation (see Revelation 6:14).

This message is for Zerubbabel personally.

We see that it is not a world power that God is speaking of shaking the heavens and earth, but of Himself:

Isaiah 13:13 "Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger."

Haggai 2:22 "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."

"And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms":

The Persian monarchy, which consisted of various kingdoms and nations, and was destroyed under Darius Codomannus by Alexander the great, who fought with him three pitched battles, and overcame him.

But the thing was of the LORD, according to his purpose and will, and by his power and providence; and therefore, the overthrow is ascribed to him.

The Jews say that the Persian monarchy fell by the Grecians thirty four years after the building of the temple; but very wrongly, it lasted longer.

"And I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen":

The empire of Alexander, which was a very strong one, and contained in it many kingdoms and nations, even the whole world, at least as he thought.

And which was divided after his death into several kingdoms.

The strength of which was greatly weakened by one another, and at last entirely destroyed by the Romans as instruments.

"And I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them":

And the horses and their riders shall come down.

Which may refer either to the chariots and horses, and their riders, belonging to the Grecians, and used in their wars.

Or else this may describe the empire of the Romans, which in its turn should be destroyed, famous for their triumphal chariots.

"Every one by the sword of his brother":

By civil wars, which was remarkably true of the successors of Alexander, as appears from Josephus and Justin.

This may be applied to all the kingdoms of this world, which will all be demolished, and be brought into subjection to Christ.

And his kingdom shall be set up in the world, the son and antitype of Zerubbabel, of whom the following words are to be understood (see Dan. 2:44).

Abendana interprets it of the army of Gog and Magog, who shall fall everyone by the sword of his brother.

God was showing Zerubbabel, that even though some country actually attacks, it is the finger of God in operation.

God uses countries to carry out His wishes.

They are but pawns in His hand.

Mark 13:8 "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these [are] the beginnings of sorrows."

Hebrews 12:26 "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."

God is all powerful.

He is control of everything and everyone.

God will cleanse the earth by destroying the heathen nations that are opposed to God and His people.

Haggai 2:23 "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts."

"In that day":

The day of Messiah's triumph (Zech. chapters 12 to 14).

"My servant":

A distinctly Davidic and messianic title (see 2 Samuel 3:18; 1 Kings 11:34; Isaiah 42:1-9; Ezekiel 37:24-25).

"Signet":

The signet ring was a symbol of honor, authority and power (Song of Solomon 8:6).

It corresponded to a king's scepter which was used to seal letters and decrees (1 Kings 21:8; Esther 8:8; Dan. 6:17).

Zerubbabel, as God's signet ring, stands as the official representative of the Davidic dynasty and represents the resumption of the messianic line interrupted by the Exile.

Just as Pharaoh gave Joseph his signet ring and made him second in the kingdom (Gen. 41:41-43), so God will do for the Davidic line of kings.

The pre-Exilic signet of Jehoiachin was removed by God (Jer. 22:24), and renewed here in his grandson, Zerubbabel.

Who reestablished the Davidic line of kings, which would culminate in the millennial reign of Christ (see note on Ezra 2:2).

Without doubt this is said concerning the expected Messiah, who will be of the seed of Zerubbabel.

And therefore this promise was not at all fulfilled in him.

For in the time of this prophecy he was but governor of Judah, and he never rose to greater dignity than what he then had.

Zerubbabel is dedicated to the service of God.

His signet seals him as having power and authority from God.

God appreciated the trust and faithfulness Zerubbabel had shown in building the temple.

God makes him the signet to show His trust in him.

The signet ring was the power of attorney to use the authority of the One who gave it.

In this, Zerubbabel was a type and shadow of Christ.

God gave Christ the signet of being His Right Hand.

Haggai Chapter 2 Questions

1. The 21st day of the seventh month would cover what feast?
2. Who was Zerubbabel's father?
3. _____ was governor of Judah.
4. What question was asked in verse 3?
5. How much wealth was in the tabernacle Solomon built?

6. Why would it have been unusual for anyone to be living, that had seen the temple Solomon built?
7. Why were the people building the temple so sad?
8. What would make them strong?
9. What is God more interested in, than putting great wealth into the temple?
10. God is pleased with their _____.
11. What was the condition placed on them to receive God's blessing?
12. What time does the author believe verse 6 is speaking of?
13. When had the temple in Jerusalem been filled with God's glory?
14. In the 21 chapter of Luke, what are some signs of the end?
15. Who can help them?
16. Who will reign as King of kings?
17. What does "silver" mean?
18. What temple is verse 9 speaking of?
19. What is the glory that will be in the latter temple?
20. Who was asked about the law?
21. Verse 12 has to do with passing on _____.
22. Why was their work unclean?
23. When did God begin to bless them in their work?
24. What percentage had their production been off?
25. Why had the hail and mildew come to their crops?
26. How will God cleanse the earth?
27. What does God giving Zerubbabel the signet mean?
28. He is a type and shadow of whom?