

Preface

The following commentary on the Book of Haggai is meant to be used in tandem with an **8-part video series**. This series offers the viewer a detailed understanding of what the temples of the Bible represent, as the primary focus of the Book of Haggai is the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.

The video series will also provide a detailed breakdown of the entire book of Haggai, with illustrations that will help readers better understand the major concepts. Haggai may be a short book, but don't let that fool you—this minor prophet is packed with major implications for the Church and Israel.

In the past, I have also completed a **25-part series on the book of Daniel**, which I recommend you view before embarking on this study as the concepts build upon each other. All these resources and many more can be found for free on **Foolishministries.com** and are in the public domain. Freely I have received, freely I will give (Matt 10:8).

Nothing in the pages to come is inspired other than the written word of God. May the Lord forgive me for the many errors I am confident my commentary contains. May he use this booklet for the glory of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the ruler of the kings of the earth, who loved me and washed me from my sins in his blood (Rev 1:5), the King who died for his own subjects.

Jeremiah 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

The Book of Haggai

Introduction

As I was preparing to teach through the book of Zechariah, I realized that there was no better introduction than to do a commentary on the prophecies made by Haggai. Since Haggai and Zechariah were partners in ministry around the time of 520 B.C... Both books contain similar concepts, including the temple and the offices of the king and priest, which all point toward the great end of all biblical prophecy, which is the testimony concerning Jesus Christ (Rev 19:19).

Now, to introduce us to the book of Haggai, we will begin by giving a brief overview of the history of the Jewish people from their slavery to Egypt through to the time these prophecies were made by Haggai in 520 B.C. Please be advised the dates given to you are close estimates. They should give you a general understanding of the circumstances Haggai was under during his prophetic ministry.

Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;2 And I will make you a great nation..."

The Jewish people descended from Abraham through Isaac and then to Jacob, who was named Israel. Jacob was the father of the 12 tribes that later made up the nation of Israel (Gen 35:10). The Hebrews began their history about 4000 years ago with 400 years of slavery to the Egyptians (Gen 15:13). After this time, God raised up Moses to be their deliverer who led them out of Egypt, through the wilderness for 40 years and into the Promised Land. The book of Joshua explores the conquest of the Promised Land by Israel. Judges shows the nation of Israel immediately

failing to keep the law of God and subsequently being judged, usually in the form of being given over to gentile rule.

The historical books of the Bible chronicle a time of blessing for the nation of Israel under the righteous reign of King David and his son Solomon around 1000 B.C... After the death of Solomon, the nation began its slide into apostasy, and the Lord sent various prophets calling the nation to repentance and warning of coming judgment. The first significant judgment was in 700 B.C., with the Assyrians conquering the northern ten tribes of Israel and leading them into captivity. Then, finally, in 586 B.C., the culmination of the judgment that the prophets had been warning about happened. The capital city, Jerusalem, was conquered, the temple was destroyed, and the final two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) were taken captive in Babylon for 70 years.

The prophets are divided into three groups: those who prophesied before the Babylonian exile, those who prophesied during the exile, and finally, those who prophesied after the exile. Haggai and Zechariah were post-exilic prophets. They were part of the remnant of the nation of Israel that returned from the Babylonian captivity.

Ezra 5:1 When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them.

Ezra 5:2 then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them supporting them.

Now that we have a background of where we are historically. These verses in Ezra summarize the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah. They encouraged the people to rebuild the temple as was predicted by Daniel the prophet decades beforehand (Dan 9:26). Their ministry took place around 520 B.C. during the rule of Persia under Darius Hystaspes. The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther chronicle this timeframe well and would be of value to read along with this study. Next, we will take a few

moments to familiarize ourselves with the main characters of the book of Haggai.

Haggai 1:1 In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

First, we will review the main character, **Haggai**. Little is known about this prophet; he may have been born on a feast day, as his name is related to festivals. His sole mission was to encourage the rebuilding of the temple. He had a brief ministry over four months (Aug 29th, 520 B.C. – Dec 18th, 520 B.C.). Haggai received five messages from the Lord, and in his last month of prophesying Zechariah, the prophet began his ministry. So, in a sense, we could say that Haggai planted, and Zechariah watered, but it was God who gave the increase.

Next, we will look at **Zerubbabel**, the governor of Judah. His name indicates he was born in Babylon during the captivity. He was the civil leader at the time who was in charge of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 4:3). He was not given the title of king but rather governor since Israel was in subjection to Persia at this time. Remember, these are the times of the Gentiles, which continue until our Lord's return.

2 Samuel 7:12-13 "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Most importantly, he was born into the Davidic line, foreshadowing the coming Messiah. Zerubbabel appears in both lineages of Jesus in the New Testament (Matt 1:12; Lk 3:27). The Lord promised King David that he would never lack a man to sit on his throne (Jeremiah 33:17). From ancient times, God began to separate his people and give clear revelation as to which family the Messiah would come from. From Abraham to

Isaac and from the nation of Israel through the 12 tribes of Jacob. From Israel to the tribe of Judah for the Messiah is the lion of the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:9, Rev 5:5). Finally, from the line of Judah to the family of King David, which is why when Jesus was born, the angels announced he would be called the Son of the Most High as to his divine nature; and as to his human nature he would be given the throne of his father David (Lk 1:32). He is both the root and creator of the line of David as God; as well as the branch and descendent as the Son of Man (Rev 22:16).

The prophet Isaiah predicted a coming king who would be both human and God to sit on David's throne (Isaiah 9:6-7). I hope you are beginning to understand why all the prophets agree that the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10). He is the entire reason for Zerubbabel rebuilding the temple and the main point of Haggai's ministry. If you want to have a deeper understanding of the Old Testament, simply ask yourself how every sentence relates to Jesus Christ.

Next, we will look at **Joshua, the high priest**. His name in Hebrew is Yehoshua, which, transliterated into Greek, is the name for Jesus. Both his and our Lord's name means "Yahweh saves" (or "Yahweh is salvation"). He descended from Aaron as all legitimate priests were part of the Aaronic priesthood under Levitical law. As a high priest, he was the religious leader of Israel during this time. Little is said about Joshua in the book of Haggai; what is most important to understand is that once this temple is rebuilt, Joshua will take part in several symbolic actions that foreshadow the coming Messiah (Zech 3:8; 6:11). Zechariah tells us that Joshua the high priest is going to be a symbol of the coming Servant and Branch which are Messianic titles. He is going to go into this rebuilt temple as a priest and receive a royal crown (Zech 3:8). The coming Messiah is not only a king but also a high priest (Zech 6:11). Under Levitical law, the offices of king and priest had to be separated, no single man could hold both offices. However, the Messiah is not coming to be a Levitical priest. He is to be a priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Long before the Levitical priesthood, long before Moses or the nation of Israel, God had a theocracy in Jerusalem. Melchizedek was a king and a priest who foreshadowed the coming Christ (Gen 14:18; Ps 110:4). Since his lineage is not recorded, he represents the eternal nature of Jesus, who

is a priest forever, who does not need to continuously offer up sacrifices year after year but offered one perfect sacrifice of himself on the cross.

As Christians, we are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Because he is our great high priest, scripture records that we will also be priests of God and reign as vassal kings under him during the millennium (Rom 8:29; Rev 20:6; Rev 21:24). In the eternal state, the kings of the earth will bring their glory into the new heavenly Jerusalem. Scripture has been beautifully woven together like a tapestry that points to the person, work, ministry, and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From Genesis to Revelation, God shows us that he is building a kingdom. Every prophet, priest, and king in the Bible must be studied in the light of Christ. What a glorious honor it is to be conformed to the image of Jesus, to have God as our Father and Jesus as our brother, and to rule as kings and priests for all of eternity with our great God and Savior Jesus Christ!

To review, we have **Haggai, the prophet** whose main ministry is to encourage the rebuilding of the temple; **Zerubbabel, the political leader** who is in the Davidic line and represents the kingly office of Christ; and finally, **Joshua, the high priest** who will one day enter this rebuilt temple and act as a symbol of the coming King-Priest our Lord Jesus Christ. We will now conclude with a brief outline of the book of Haggai.

Haggai 1:4 "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?"

Chapter 1:1-11 begins with a rebuke from the Lord regarding the people's indifference towards rebuilding the temple. They had taken care of their own houses well enough while the house of the Lord was in ruins. The nation was experiencing economic hardship, and the Lord said this was due to their lack of work in the temple. Then, in a second message 23 days later, the Lord tells the people that he is still with them to encourage them (Hagg 1:12-15). Haggai then commands the people to rebuild the temple, and they repent and do just that under the influence and motivation of God's Spirit.

Haggai 2:7 'I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.

The following message in chapter 2:1-9 begins with the builders being sent an encouraging message reminding them that they are God's covenant people. Just as God had protected them during their exodus from Egypt, he will protect them now. Furthermore, many of them believe this temple is insignificant compared to Solomon's, which the Babylonians had destroyed. The Lord tells them this temple will one day be even more glorious than Solomon's. That a time is coming when God will shake the heavens and the earth, overthrowing the gentile kingdoms and filling this temple with the wealth and glory of all the surrounding nations.

Haggai 2:19 'Is the seed still in the barn? Even including the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree, it has not borne fruit. Yet from this day on I will bless you.'"

In chapters 2:10-19, Haggai receives another message focused on reminding Israel that they were experiencing difficult times economically due to their national disobedience. This was a form of God's judgement for their indifference towards rebuilding the temple. However, now that they have begun the work, he promises a time of blessing. Haggai is a very practical book containing a wealth of applications for our lives.

Haggai 2:22 'I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.'

The final message in chapter 2:20-23 concludes with a description of a time of destruction for the kingdoms of the earth when all gentile

authority is finally ended. This will be after the tribulation just prior to the second coming of Christ, whom Zerubbabel foreshadows. Almost all the prophets in scripture speak of this day, titling it “The day of the Lord.” A time when the Lord will end the satanic rebellion of the human race and once again rule from Jerusalem as king over all the earth (Zech 14:9).

Luke 12:32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

The primary purpose of rebuilding the temple is to foreshadow the coming King-Priest who rules from Jerusalem in his temple. To keep us looking forward to a time when Jesus ends the Satanic rebellion of all gentile nations (Dan 7:13-14) and personally reigns from the Davidic throne in Jerusalem. We should be greatly encouraged as we wait for the day when the Son of Man will go up to the Ancient of Days and receive a kingdom. Jesus Christ will then give this Kingdom to his people, those he has purchased with his own blood. Rejoice, saints, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the Kingdom!

Haggai Chapter 1

The Time to Rebuild

Haggai 1:1 In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

In 538. B.C. Cyrus issued a decree allowing the remnant of Israelites to return from the Babylonian captivity and begin rebuilding the temple (Ezra 1:1-3). The foundation was laid shortly after they returned, and the altar was rebuilt. However, after a year or two of progress, all buildings were halted due to opposition (Ezra 4:24). This period of inactivity lasted roughly 14-16 years, at which point in 520 B.C. Haggai began to prophesy and instruct them to return to work. Then, four years later, in 516 B.C., the temple was completed.

Haggai 1:2“Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘This people says, “The time has not come, even the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.”’

The first message from Haggai is a scathing rebuke of the nation. Imagine hearing God refer to you collectively as “this people” and not “my people”. The remnant was claiming it was not “God’s timing” to rebuild his temple; they were effectively making an excuse cloaked in false spirituality. As we examine ourselves, we must be sure we are not doing the same thing. Is it possible we mask our laziness and indifference toward the plans of God by saying it is not the right timing?

Haggai 1:3 Then the word of the LORD came by
Haggai the prophet, saying,

Haggai 1:4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in
your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?”

A Godly man will care more about the Lord’s house than his own. King David’s attitude was completely different than that of the remnant. He desired to build a house for the Lord precisely because the Lord had given him a beautiful house made of cedar (2 Sam 7:2). Solomon completed the temple in seven years. He did not finish his own home until six years later (1 Kings 7:1). May we all learn to set our minds on the things above, not those of the earth (Col 3:2). For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we await our savior the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil 3:20).

Haggai 1:5 Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts,
“Consider your ways!

Haggai 1:6 “You have sown much, but harvest little; you
eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink,
but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on
clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who
earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes.”

Several curses Haggai quoted here are exact quotes from the law of Moses as consequences for disobedience. The message required them to examine their current path and see if they wanted to continue. This meant looking closely at how God had been providentially dealing with them as a nation. Their own law told them they must revere the temple (Lev 19:30), but they were only concerned with their own houses. Therefore, the curses of the law, including the nation’s severe poverty, were coming to pass (Dt 28:38).

Haggai 1:7 Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider
your ways!

The nation most likely believed Satan was behind their economic hardship when, in reality, it was the judgment of God. Likewise, Christians must not despise the Lord's discipline, whether through afflictions or temptations. Nor should we blame Satan when we feel something negative has happened in our lives. Nor should we faint as if the Lord would forsake us or assume we have exhausted the patience of the Almighty every time we sin (Heb 12:5-6). Instead, let us examine ourselves daily and judge ourselves so that we need not be disciplined by the Lord (1 Cor 11:30-31). Let us be thankful the Lord takes time to discipline us, for If we are without discipline, we are not true sons (Heb 12:8).

Haggai 1:8 “Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the LORD.

The Lord commands the people to begin working immediately on the temple. He gives simple instructions concerning the location, supplies, and ministry to be accomplished. They were to go to the mountain, bring wood, and rebuild the temple. Often, what the Lord commands us to do is not particularly complex, but we refuse to do it due to sin. The book of Haggai is practical; we all need to be exhorted that the Lord redeemed us to be a people who are zealous for good deeds, which have been prepared beforehand, and that we should not lack in diligence or fervency when attempting to accomplish anything for the Lord (Titus 2:14; Eph 2:10; Rom 12:11.) Finally, the motivation for serving the Lord must be correct. The whole purpose of building the temple is that the Lord may be glorified, as this temple points toward Jesus and will one day be walked in by him. The temple is built on Mt. Moriah, where Isaac foreshadows Christ in that he was almost sacrificed, but God provided a lamb to be his substitute and die in his place (Gen 22).

Haggai 1:9 “You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?” declares the LORD of hosts, “Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house.”

As Solomon said, nothing changes; God's people often have their priorities wrong in all dispensations. We constantly worry about the mundane necessities of life and forget we are children of the Most High. God is separating his children from the nations, teaching them to cling to him that they might be a people for renown, praise, and glory (Jer 13:11). Jesus reminds his disciples that the pagan nations may focus on mere necessities of life. However, it is not befitting for a child of God (Matt 6:32). When we focus on God's priorities instead of our own, not only are we happier and more fruitful. We also have a promise from God, who cannot lie, that he will provide for our needs.

Haggai 1:10-11 Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands."

The Lord reiterates his original rebuke that the nation is experiencing hardship due to its neglect of building the temple. Haggai almost paraphrases the curses of the law as a severe warning to the nation (Dt 28:23). The people under the faithful preaching of the word of God through Haggai are about to undergo a genuine revival.

Haggai 1:12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him. And the people showed reverence for the Lord. 13 Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke by the commission of the Lord to the people saying, "I am with you," declares the Lord." 14 So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

The Lord brought this revival to pass quickly through the gracious operation of his Spirit. From the command to rebuild until the work began on the temple was a mere 23 days. Notice the elements that spark Haggai's revival: the word of God, the fear of the Lord, and Spirit-empowered obedience or repentance. We live in a time where many Christian organizations claim to be having revivals. What I would like to do now is to review several revivals recorded for us in scripture. My goal is not to judge a particular revival but rather to show the common trends of the revivals in the Bible so that we might grow in discernment.

The book of Proverbs says the fear of the Lord and the teaching of the wise are both a fountain of life, that one might turn away from sin (Prov 14:27; Prov 13:14). Clearly, wise men instruct people in the fear of the Lord. During the Exodus from Egypt, Moses preached the word of God to the Egyptians, claiming the Lord would destroy them with hail. Those who feared the word of the Lord hid inside and were saved (Ex 9:20).

Jonah preached to the wicked city of Nineveh, warning the nation that if they refused to repent within 40 days, God would destroy their city. The people feared the Lord, believed the word, and were saved from the wrath to come (Jon 3:4-5).

There was a great revival under righteous king Josiah (2 Kings 22-23). It began during a period of gross idolatry by simply finding the scriptures that had been forgotten in the temple (2 Kings 22:8). When the king heard the word of God, he was cut to the heart and immediately repented (2 Kings 22:11).

From there, he realized the wrath of God had been unleashed against Israel because they had not listened to the words of God and instituted reforms (2 Kings 22:13). He began by slaughtering the false priests, ending cult worship, and tearing down the idolatrous altars (2 Kings 23:4-20). Scripture acknowledges that the revival under the righteous king Josiah was led by the Spirit, in that no other king turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul like him (2 Kings 23:25).

Ezra led a revival because he set his heart to studying, practicing, and teaching the law of the Lord in Israel (Ezra 7:10). This led the nation to turn away from sexual immorality and intermarriage, which were

forbidden. A hallmark of biblical revivals is genuine mourning for sin, hatred of sin, and zealous pursuit of holiness and reform (Ezra 9:4; 10:1).

King Hezekiah led a revival after the previously wicked king, Ahaz, had set up idolatrous altars throughout Jerusalem. He led the people to acknowledge their sin, fear the Lord, and receive the word of God through his prophets (2 Chron 29:25). He commanded the nation to stop doing what was evil in the sight of the Lord and immediately cleanse the temple of any trace of idolatry (2 Chron 29:5). This led to genuine Spirit empowered repentance and a complete restoration of temple worship (2 Chron 29:20-35). The nation acknowledged and rejoiced that God had provided this so quickly for them, which indicates a genuine move of the Holy Spirit (2 Chron 29:36).

The final point I will focus on regarding revivals is that they all led to reinstating the sacrificial system, which points to Jesus Christ. The revivals under Josiah, Hezekiah, and Haggai culminated in the sacrifice of the Passover lamb (2 Kings 23:21; 2 Chron 30:15; Ezra 6:20). What could be a more robust gospel presentation? During the Exodus, the angel of death came upon the land to kill many of the firstborn sons and would only pass over your home if you had the blood of the Lamb sprinkled upon your doorpost (Ex 12:13). Let us review one final revival before we conclude.

Discussion of revivals would only be complete if it included a New Testament revival, and what better than the day of Pentecost? (Acts 2:1-41). On this day, the exact ingredients of the Old Testament revivals are present. The Spirit came like a mighty rushing wind, the word of God was preached, fear came upon every soul, men were cut to the heart and desired to turn back to God, and 3000 souls believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God that Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed for us (1 Cor 5:7).

Let us now review the chapter's interpretation and conclude with some applications for the church. The remnant of Israelites brought back from captivity were struggling with indifference towards the plans of the Lord. They did not want to work in the Lord's temple and were more interested in their homes. The prophet Haggai warned them several times that their poor economic conditions were due to the neglect of the temple. He then commanded them to get supplies and immediately begin working. After

23 days, they began reconstructing the temple. This was due to the word of God preached, the fear of the Lord, and most importantly, the gracious operation of God's Spirit generating a genuine revival. The temple was then completed four years later.

I will conclude with a word of application for the church, which is being built into a spiritual temple of the Lord (Eph 2:21). We, too, have been called by the grace of God to partake in the Lord's work of building this temple, so long as we lay no other foundation than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3:11).

The Lord Jesus Christ gave us simple instructions, just as he did to Haggai regarding the temple. We are given a location, not to go up on a mountain but to go into the world. We are given supplies, not wood, but rather the word of God, which is able to equip us thoroughly, all prayer, and most importantly, the Holy Spirit. We are told the work we must do, not to build a physical temple. Instead, we should preach, teach, and make disciples of all nations so that they might grow into a Holy Temple in The Lord.

Finally, we must have the proper motivation so that God may be glorified. We do that by abiding in Christ, for apart from him, we can do nothing (John 15:5). We must trust in his all-sufficient work on the cross and never labor one moment for our salvation. Instead, based on what Christ has done for us, we serve based on the strength he provides us that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 4:11). When appropriately done, we should be like the moon that faithfully witnesses in the sky that has no light of her own, but merely reflects the glory of the sun (Ps 89:37).

Haggai Chapter 2:1-9

The Shaking of The Nations

Haggai 2:1 In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet:

Haggai 2:2 “Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say,

Chapter two begins with the following message from the Lord through Haggai. The first message to Israel rebuked them for indifference and commanded them to rebuild on the first day of the sixth month. The second message encouraging them was 23 days later, the 24th day of the sixth month. The third message begins roughly three weeks later, on the 21st day of the seventh month, or October 17th, 520 B.C., which would have been the final day of the feast of Tabernacles. All the prophecies of Haggai take place over four months.

Haggai 2:3 ‘Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison?’

The remnant was in captivity in Babylon for 70 years. Some of the elderly captives who returned were alive to see the luxurious construction of Solomon's temple. When the foundation stone of Zerubbabel's temple was laid, some Israelites were filled with joy and sang; others wept bitterly (Ezra 3:12-13). They compared the glory of Israel and Solomon's temple to the lackluster construction of Zerubbabel's temple combined

with the poverty of the returned remnant. Zechariah, the partner of Haggai, claimed they were despising the day of small things (Zech 4:10).

How often do we look down on something the Lord might value greatly? How often do we belittle certain members in the body of Christ as if the eye could say to the ear, I have no need of you? When the reality is that the weaker parts of the body of Christ are given more abundant honor in God's eyes (1 Cor 12:21-23). Let us always remember that God is the judge. He who is faithful with a little will also be faithful in much (Lk 16:10), and what is highly esteemed in the eyes of man is an abomination to God (Lk 16:15).

Haggai 2:4 'But now take courage, Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD, 'take courage also, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you people of the land take courage,' declares the LORD, 'and work; for I am with you,' declares the LORD of hosts.

As the building project continued and the people demonstrated their obedience to God, the Lord began to encourage them. He told them to gather courage and reiterated his promise that he would be with them.

The prophet Zechariah, speaking on this theme, said the temple would be rebuilt not by human might or power but by the spirit of God (Zechariah 4:6-10). The great confidence of the saints is the Lord; he is our strength, he is our righteousness, he is the one who does our good works for us, and unless the Lord builds the house, then we all labor in vain (Is 26:12; Jer 23:6; Ps 28:7; 127:1).

We have seen from chapter one that we are called to labor; that is clear but never in our own strength. When Christ gave the church the great commission, what was his encouragement? The exact same words spoken in Haggai's day, Jesus promises us "lo, **I am with you** always, even to the end of the age." Apart from Christ, we can do nothing, yet through Christ, we can do all things!

Haggai 2:5 'As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!'

Yahweh comforts and encourages the people by reminding them of who he is and the promises he has given them. He is not some impersonal deity to them; he is Israel's God, who saved them from bondage to the Egyptians. This is the Lord who plagued their enemies with frogs, turned water to blood, thundered from heaven against Pharaoh, and sent hail to destroy the land; Yahweh literally decimated the entire Egyptian empire to deliver them. Throughout the Bible, The Lord describes himself to Israel as the one who brought them out of Egypt (Ex 29:46). Yahweh not only provided manna from heaven to eat and water from the rock to drink; he also gave them his good Spirit to instruct them (Neh 9:20). This is a personal, loving, sovereign God who carried Israel to himself on eagles' wings (Ex 19:4).

Furthermore, the Lord reminds them that His Spirit is among them. Yahweh promised them when they came out of Egypt that he would abide with them and dwell among them (Ex 29:45-46). Faith should always look at the promises of God that are fulfilled in Christ (2 Cor 1:20). The whole point of rebuilding the temple is to keep the people's focus on dwelling with God. Recall how the Spirit of God, in the first place, led to the rebuilding of the temple (Hag 1:14). The people of God should be greatly comforted by whom God has revealed himself to be. As Paul says in the New Testament if God is for us, who can be against us?

Haggai 2:6-7 "For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. I will shake all the nations..'

As part of the message of encouragement, the Lord reminds them that there is coming a time when Israel will return to her former glory as the leader of the nations (Dt 30:5). The timeline is essential as the remnant of Jews would have had the entire book of Daniel at this point. In our Daniel series, we learned of a vision in chapter two depicting a great statue that represents the gentile nations of the world. The vision explains how a stone cut out without hands (Jesus Christ) will one day destroy all the gentile nations. Then, the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that shatters all other kingdoms, and his kingdom will endure forever (Dan 2:44).

Daniel, chapter seven, unfolds another vision of four great beasts that also represent the gentile nations of the world. The chronology of both visions of the prophet Daniel and Haggai matches up. First, the gentile kingdoms are destroyed, and then the kingdom is given to the saints forever (Dan 7:27). The Lord is encouraging the Israelites with promises concerning God's coming kingdom.

This "shaking" of the nations is what Jesus spoke about during his Olivet discourse in Matthew 24. Many of the prophets describe a global cataclysmic event or "shaking" that will happen when the Lord returns.

Ezekiel said a great earthquake would take place in Israel on the day of the Lord's blazing wrath (Eze 38:19). Isaiah said on that day, the Lord's anger would burn, the heavens would tremble, and the earth would shake (Is 13:13). The final bowl of God's wrath in the revelation foretells the greatest earthquake ever to take place (Rev 16:18).

Haggai is prophesying about the great day of God's wrath when Jesus comes back to strike the nations (Rev 19:15). On that day, the sun will be black and the moon as dark as blood, stars will fall to the sky, men's hearts will fail them for fear of what is coming upon the earth, The Lord will roar from Zion and the heavens and the earth will tremble, men will beg for the mountains to crush them to hide themselves from the wrath of the Lamb (Rev 6:12-17; Joel 3:16; Lk 21:26). As we study the coming day of God's vengeance, we need to remember our mission to plead with people to come to him while it is still the day of salvation (Is 61:2).

Haggai 2:6 is the only verse in Haggai quoted in the New Testament (Heb 12:26-28). This passage of scripture reveals that God will shake the universe so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain. Furthermore, it reveals that the Church is receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken and should serve God with reverence and awe. The Kingdom of God was a source of encouragement for the Israelites as they combatted fear and despair. Even so, Christ tells his little flock not to fear, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give us this kingdom (Lk 12:32).

Haggai 2:7 'I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.

Haggai 2:8 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts.

After the nations' judgment, the Lord will give their wealth to Israel to glorify his temple. Many prophets speak of a time when Israel's fortunes will be restored (Zeph 3:20). Haggai is one of the last prophets, and therefore, the remnant of godly Jews would have been searching the scriptures for encouragement at this time.

The prophet Zechariah speaks of a time when the nations would gather to make war against Jerusalem (Zech 12:9) when the Lord himself at his second coming will go forth and fight against those nations (Zech 14:3). On that day, the gold and silver of the nations would be gathered in great abundance (Zech 14:14). Just as when the Hebrews came out of bondage to Egypt, they plundered them (Exodus 12:36). After the battle of Armageddon, the wealth of the nations will be given to Israel.

The prophet Isaiah speaks of the restoration of Israel as a time when they will rejoice as the wealth of the nations is handed over to them (Isaiah 60:5). How the Gentiles will one day bring Israel both gold and frankincense just as the magi did at Christ's birth (Matthew 2:11). Then flocks of cattle from various tribes throughout the earth will be brought to Israel to sacrifice. The Lord will again glorify his temple (Isaiah 60:7). Israel will again be a light to the world and boast in the riches of the nations (Isaiah 61:6).

The prophet Micah speaks of a time when the nations of the world would assemble against Jerusalem. These nations will be clueless as they rush upon Israel to destroy her; they will fail to realize it is the Lord's sovereign plan. He will gather them for the battle of Armageddon so that they might be destroyed and their wealth devoted to the Lord of all the earth (Mic 5:11-13; Rev 16:14).

Haggai 2:9 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the LORD of hosts."

The Lord is encouraging the remnant of Israelites as they build that the glory of this latter temple will be even greater than Solomon's. The Jewish people viewed the temple as a single structure existing under different forms. When God speaks about the former glory of Solomon's temple or the latter glory of Zerubbabel's temple, it is called "this house." The Tabernacle in the wilderness, the Temple of Solomon, Zerubbabel's temple, and the final millennial temple are all connected.

In our series reviewing the temples of the Bible, we learned how the Shekinah glory of God was manifested to Israel in a cloud. The glory cloud rested upon the Tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon during their dedication. However, when Israel fell away from the Lord, the prophet Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord depart from Solomon's temple (Eze 10:18). The visible glory cloud and presence of the Lord never returned to Zerubbabel's temple. However, instead, Jesus, who is the radiance of God's glory and exact imprint of his nature, walked in it! (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus told his parents they should have known he would be in his Father's house (Lk 2:49).

However, a time is coming when the Lord Jesus Christ will return after he shakes the nations and will then rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the Lord will be called the Holy Mountain (Zech 8:3). Then he will sit on the throne of his Father King David, and the glory of the Lord will return to the millennial temple (Eze 43:2). The survivors of all the nations will go up every year to worship the Lord Jesus Christ during the feast of tabernacles (Zech 14:16), the very feast day that this vision was given To Haggai. What an incredible unity the scriptures provide!

Haggai 2:9 ..., 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the LORD of hosts."

Finally, when The Lord comes back and dwells in Jerusalem, he promises to give peace. It is not merely our peace with God through believing in Christ, although that is paramount. Nor some false global peace that could be attained politically before Christ comes. Instead, as the prince of peace after the judgment of the nations at the battle of Armageddon, Christ will usher in a time of universal world peace and prosperity. The millennial kingdom will be a time of unparalleled blessings as the world returns to an Eden-like state. There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace as he sits on the throne of David and reigns over the nations (Isaiah 9:5-7).

1 Peter 2:9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

I want to conclude with a few thoughts on how these promises pertain to the Church. We must remember that although Israel and the Church are two distinct groups of God, that does not mean we are completely detached from each other. You are sons of Abraham through faith in Jesus Christ, not sons of Genghis Khan or some other gentile ruler. The Bible describes Israel and the Church as two distinct branches of one tree (Rom 11:17).

In the letters given to the Churches, we see Jesus describing himself as the one who has the key of David (Rev 3:7). He gives the Church a promise that if we overcome, we will be given authority over the nations (Rev 2:26-27). Paul wrote to the Church at Ephesus that, formerly, they were separated from Christ and alienated from the commonwealth of Israel. However, now that they were saved, they were no longer strangers and aliens but citizens with the saints and were of God's household.

Jesus himself said to the group of Jews who rejected him that the kingdom of God would be taken away from them and given to a people producing the fruit of it (Matt 21:43). The Church is that group; we are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a Holy Nation (1 Pet 2:9). The Lord warned Israel during the time of Moses that they would turn away from

him and provoke his jealousy. Therefore, he would make them jealous with a nation that is not a nation, a foolish nation, a group of individuals saved out of every tribe, tongue, people, and language (Dt 32:21; Rev 5:9-10). The Church is that nation.

God has given the nation of Israel many promises, and he has also given the Church many promises, and often, they overlap. The Church is not Israel, and Israel is not the Church, but we are also not completely detached from one another. I cannot tell you exactly what activities the Church will be doing in the millennial kingdom, nor the activities of Israel. However, I encourage you to look forward to when we will rule the nations with Christ—our great God and savior who purchased us with his own blood. Oh, Lord, may your kingdom come, and you will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

Haggai Chapter 2:10-19

The Pollution of Sin

Haggai 2:10 On the twenty-fourth of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Haggai the prophet, saying,

The following message from Haggai comes about two months after the previous one. The 24th of the ninth month would correspond with Dec 18th, 520 B.C. Haggai gives five messages from the Lord, all of which take place within four months. The people would be roughly three months into rebuilding the temple when this fourth message was given to the remnant in Israel. It is essential to note that two messages were delivered from Haggai on this day. The fourth and fifth (final) messages were delivered around Dec 18th, 520 B.C... The fourth message appears to begin as a rebuke and end with a blessing; the fifth and final message reinforces God's promises to Israel regarding the coming messianic kingdom.

The timeline is also essential, as at the same time this message is being given, simultaneously, the prophet Zechariah has begun his ministry (Zech 1:1). So, there are now two prophets in Israel preaching divine messages from the Lord. Zechariah's first message corresponds to a similar timeframe to this prophecy in Haggai. Zechariah's message was straightforward: the remnant in Israel needed to return to the Lord (Zech 1:3), turn away from their evil deeds (Zech 1:4), or else face judgment for their disobedience (Zech 1:5-6).

Haggai 2:11 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Ask now the priests for a ruling:'

The priests oversaw the process of making sure the law was correctly applied. When a matter was too complex, the priests would judge it (Dt 17:9). A faithful priest would enjoy a unique relationship of peace with God; they would walk in the fear of the Lord and be in awe of the character of God (Mal 2:5). The law of truth would be in their mouth, and they would turn many people away from sin (Mal 2:6). The lips of a priest would preserve knowledge, and many would look to them for spiritual instruction (Mal 2:7).

We can all learn a lesson from this as the Church is being made into a kingdom of priests by Jesus, who loved us and washed us of from our sins in his own blood (Rev 1:5-6). We can do this by studying to show ourselves approved, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). That we might all be faithful ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20). With a goal of turning many people away from sin to Christ (James 5:20). By the grace of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, may we all accomplish this.

Haggai 2:12 'If a man carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and touches bread with this fold, or cooked food, wine, oil, or any other food, will it become holy?' And the priests answered, "No."

Haggai 2:13 Then Haggai said, "If one who is unclean from a corpse touches any of these, will the latter become unclean?" And the priests answered, "It will become unclean."

The meat referenced here would be the bodies of the sacrificed animals the priests were allowed to partake of (Lev 6:29). The message is that something holy will not convey holiness to an ordinary object. Whereas if someone were unclean from touching a dead body and touched something holy, it would be defiled (Num 19:11). Therefore, holiness is not communicable, whereas sin and defilement are. A healthy child that touches someone sick will not transmit health; you cannot catch health, but you can easily catch a sickness. You cannot transmit holiness, but you can undoubtedly transmit unholiness. Paul warns the churches that a little leaven (sin) will leaven the whole batch of dough (Gal 5:6), just as one bad apple spoils the whole bunch.

Solomon said even something as pure and fragrant as perfume would be ruined if just a tiny flea got into it (Eccl 10:1). Even so, foolishness and sin outweigh wisdom and honor in the testimony of believers. A single act of indiscretion can ruin the testimony of even the most faithful Christians, just as a single drop of poison in a glass of water renders it deadly. So, sin, if not dealt with, will corrupt anything it touches.

Haggai 2:14 Then Haggai said, “So is this people. And so is this nation before Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.

Having explained the lesson, the Lord now applies it to the nation of Israel. The people had returned from captivity, rebuilt the altar, and offered sacrifices again (Ezra 3:3). However, after they experienced hardship, they neglected to rebuild the temple for up to 14 years. Therefore, the nation was unclean due to the sin of negligence. Consequently, they could offer God no acceptable service. They assumed God was well pleased with their works because they started sacrificing again, but the reality was that sin had already spread to the entire nation. The nation was practicing sin by neglecting temple construction. They essentially told God they would offer him a small quantity of worship but no more. They needed to learn that an outward form of religion would not communicate holiness to them. God desires obedience rather than sacrifice and heart worship over the outward form of religion; he cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly (Is 1:12-13). Their sacrifices would not make them holy, for the Lord desires obedience more than sacrifice (1 Sam 15:22).

The road to destruction is broad; there are many ways to arrive at hell. You can worship a false God, or you can attempt to worship the true God falsely and so manifest your lack of true faith. The Bible is full of stories of men who tried to worship the true God in an unauthorized way and were rejected. Cain's offering was not accepted by the Lord (Gen 4:4), but he had respect for Abel's. What was the difference between Cain and Abel? Why did Abel offer the prescribed sacrifice and not Cain? The New Testament reveals Abel believed in God, and therefore demonstrated his belief by following the instructions regarding how Yahweh wanted to be

worshipped (Hebrews 11:4). Nadab and Abihu attempted to offer an unauthorized form of fire before the Lord and were immediately killed (Num 3:4). The Israelites built a golden calf in the wilderness and did not claim it was a strange god, but rather the one that brought them out of Egypt (Exodus 32:8). They attempted to worship the true God in a false way, and many of them died in the wilderness. False worship manifests a lack of saving faith.

We have many modern-day examples of this type of behavior. Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons deny the deity of Jesus Christ. Catholics mix the gospel of grace in salvation with the works of men and, just like touching a dead body, render their own gospel unclean. Those of the ecumenical movement claim we all ultimately believe the same thing and should forget biblical doctrine altogether. There is a brand of Christianity that titles itself "gay Christianity," which is willing to go to church but not repent (1 Cor 6:9). We have many women pastors in the world who believe they are serving the Lord on Sundays when in reality they are in outright rebellion (1 Tim 2:12). All of these groups attempt to disguise their false doctrines with good works. They make much of their personal righteousness by boasting about feeding the poor, starting a hospital, or doing missionary work. Scripture is clear that the unbelieving are defiled; they may profess to know God, but by their actions, deny him and are worthless for any good deed (Titus 1:15-16). For without faith, it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6).

Haggai 2:15 'But now, do consider from this day onward: before one stone was placed on another in the temple of the LORD, 16 from that time when one came to a grain heap of twenty measures, there would be only ten; and when one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there would be only twenty.

Haggai tells the people to ponder their economic circumstances from the 14 years of neglect of the Lord's house until now. Before they began to build, it appears God cursed the nation with what we might call hyperinflation. When a farmer expected a certain amount of grain to be threshed from a grain heap it would yield half of what he expected, that is 50% inflation. When someone whose trade was making wine would

estimate how much a vat would yield, they would receive less than half their estimate! The Lord reminds them that they were suffering economically due to their indifference towards rebuilding the temple.

If only America could learn this lesson right now; over the past few years since the pandemic, we have seen inflation skyrocket. From oil and gas to cars and groceries, we have all seen well near 50% inflation. The worst of it has ravaged our housing market. Within less than five years, the average mortgage payment and rent have almost doubled. When people come to their paycheck expecting it to pay their housing expenses, they now find it only pays half! If only America would consider her ways (Hag 1:7) and turn back to the one who has struck us (Hos 6:1).

Haggai 2:17 I smote you and every work of your hands with blasting wind, mildew and hail; yet you did not come back to Me,' declares the LORD.

We must be able to distinguish between the discipline of the Lord and his wrath. As harsh as this message appears, it is about to become a blessing. God reiterates to the nation the law's curses for their disobedience (Dt 28:22). However, He also calls the nation to return to him. The message of God's discipline is to return to him because he has redeemed you (Is 45:22). Whereas the message of his wrath is to depart from him because he never knew you (Matt 7:23). There will never be a child of God who is not bought with the blood of Christ. Therefore, as severe as these judgments were to the nation, there is always a remnant of God's children whom he will call to himself. These children will always respond to the discipline of their Father one way or another, whereas the wicked will not turn to the one who has struck them (Hos 6:1). That really may be the best description of repentance in the Bible, it is simply turning to the one who struck us, God has torn in discipline, but he will also heal (Hos 6:1). Let us not despise the discipline of our Father, for whomever he loves he disciplines (Heb 12:6).

Haggai 2:18 'Do consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month; from the day when the temple of the LORD was founded, consider:

Haggai 2:19 'Is the seed still in the barn? Even including the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree, it has not borne fruit. Yet from this day on I will bless you.'"

Although the people had been rebuilding the temple for several months, they still had seen no blessing from God. Months earlier, Haggai had explained they were experiencing economic lack due to not rebuilding the temple; now that they had begun to rebuild, I imagine they were curious why they were still suffering economically. The answer is that although genuine repentance and obedience always produce a blessing, the effects are not always immediate or tangible. God is not an ATM; his blessings can be spiritual, physical, or both. Furthermore, just because they had repented does not mean the punishment for their sin would immediately end, like a man who struggles with drugs his whole life and then comes to Christ. He may have forgiveness from God and peace of mind as well as all the benefits of salvation while, at the same time, his body is still ravaged from drug use. Even so, the nation of Israel had repented of its sin and begun to build, but they were still living in poverty.

The Lord concludes his message by having the people take special note of the exact day of this message. Remember, it is right around Dec 18th, 520 B.C. The people are roughly three months into rebuilding the temple at this point. The Lord promises that from this day on, he will bless them. In his sovereignty, he had decreed that the punishment was enough, and now that they had begun to rebuild the temple and demonstrated that their repentance was genuine, they would be blessed as a nation. We see that the discipline of the Lord always brings about a harvest of righteousness to those who are trained by it (Heb 12:11). The nation of Israel had experienced severe judgment for their sin, and by the grace of God, a revival came about, and they began to rebuild (Hag 1:14). Now after several months, the blessings of God will follow. God is always faithful to his promises.

Ephesians 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

In conclusion, we must realize the absolute necessity of faith in Christ when speaking about works acceptable to God. For without faith, it is impossible to please him, since we must believe that he not only exists but is also a rewarder of those who diligently seek him (Heb 11:6). The love of God is that we obey his commands, but his commands are not burdensome (1 John 5:3). When a person turns to the Lord, he is born again and given a new heart that genuinely desires to please God. Not to earn salvation but rather because they are thankful to receive it as a free gift. These works are acceptable to God and will be rewarded by Christ (Rev 22:12).

Haggai Chapter 2:20-22

The Destruction of The World Kingdoms

Haggai 2:20 Then the word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying

Haggai's fifth and final message came on the same day as the fourth—the 24th of the ninth month or roughly Dec 18th, 520 B.C. Haggai gives five messages from the Lord, all of which take place within four months. The people would be roughly three months into rebuilding the temple when this final prophecy was delivered. The fourth message, which took place on the same day, began with a rebuke and ended with the Lord promising to bless the nation from that day on. Like Haggai's third message, this fifth and final prophecy offers hope for the coming messianic kingdom.

Haggai 2:21 “Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah, saying, ‘I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.

Immediately we notice something unique about the final message: **it is addressed to Zerubbabel alone**, unlike the other messages, which were not only to him but also to Joshua, the high priest, and all the remnant of the people (Hag 2:2). Remember that Zerubbabel was in the Davidic line, which is the line the Messiah and promised ruler would come from (2 Sam 7:12-13). Zerubbabel is in both lineages of Jesus recorded in the New Testament (Matthew 1:12; Lk 3:27). When Jesus was born, the angel Gabriel told Joseph that Jesus would be given the

throne of his father David as well as establish an eternal kingdom (Lk 1:31-33). Recall that the book of Haggai is all about rebuilding the temple, which is where the Messiah will one day sit upon the Davidic throne and rule the nations from Jerusalem (Ps 110:2). The reason this message is given solely to Zerubbabel is that it is centered around Jesus Christ, the coming Messiah, and King.

We also see Haggai reiterate the same promise regarding the **shaking of the heavens and earth** from the third message given several months prior (Hag 2:6-9). This was made to encourage Israel that though they were little and weak among the nations right now, one day they would again rule. That God would destroy the kingdoms of the world and set up an eternal kingdom (Dan 2:44), and that Israel would be the head of all nations and no longer the tail (Dt 28:13).

Take note that both Haggai and Zechariah are preaching messages regarding repentance. The final prophets to Israel were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. All of them focused on and preached about national repentance. The promises from God regarding the coming messianic kingdom are unconditional and will take place. However, they will not happen until the nation of Israel diligently obeys the Lord (Zech 6:15), which will happen at the second coming of Christ when they look upon the one whom they have pierced (Zech 12:10).

On an individual level, no Jew is promised to have any part in this kingdom apart from repentance towards God and faith in Christ. In fact, at the second coming of Christ, the majority of Jewish people will still reject the Lord to the point that two-thirds of the people living in Jerusalem at the time of the second coming will perish (Zech 13:8). However, a third will remain, be brought through the fires of the tribulation and will call upon the name of the Lord and be saved (Zech 13:9). The final prophets are encouraging the people about the coming kingdom and warning them not to miss out due to disobedience. Although all who enter the kingdom will be saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, the faith which God gives produces obedience (Rom 16:26).

Haggai 2:22 I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.'

The moment this verse describes is known as the day of the Lord, more specifically, the battle of Armageddon and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev 16:15-16). The prophet Isaiah describes this day as cruel, with wrath and burning anger, when the Lord Jesus Christ will destroy the earth (Isaiah 13:9). Ezekiel described it as a day of doom for the nations (Eze 30:3). Malachi called it the great and terrible day of the Lord (Mal 4:5).

Almost every prophet in scripture has something to say about this fearful day. To better understand biblical prophecy, we must focus on the first and second coming of Jesus Christ, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10). The first coming is described as the day of salvation. In contrast, the second coming is "the day of vengeance" (Isaiah 61:2). The first coming is characterized by grace, where Jesus came to die for his enemies, and the second is where he comes back to judge them.

On this day, Jesus will set out to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem (Zech 12:9). Those slain by the Lord will be many, for by fire and sword he will judge the world (Isaiah 66:16). The Lord Jesus himself will come back in flaming fire, executing vengeance on those who do not obey the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

This verse tells us that the **Lord will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms**. This appears to be speaking initially about the alliance of 10 kings who will join the Antichrist to establish a global government. This final kingdom will be a brutal alliance of nations that will literally trample and crush the entire world (Dan 7:23-24; Rev 17:12). The day of their destruction is the same day that they come against the land of Israel, for Israel is God's chosen nation and the apple of his eye (Eze 39:8; Zech 2:8).

The verse goes on to say that the Lord will **destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations**. Scripture makes it clear that the nations of

the world are under the limited control of Satan (Matt 4:8), for he is the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4). Which is why we see the final kingdom of the Antichrist receiving power, a throne, and great authority from Satan (Rev 13:2). Which he uses to wage war against the saints (Rev 13:7).

The Devil has always been the enemy of the nation of Israel (Zech 3:2), as well as all of God's elect. Whether it was the slaughter of the infants by Pharaoh, Haman attempting to annihilate the nation, Antiochus Epiphanes massacring the Jews, Herod attempting to kill the newborn Jesus, or Adolf Hitler attempting his "final solution." Ultimately, every attempt to wipe out the Jews has had a single source: Satan himself. When we understand the Bible, it also reveals to us the actual reasons behind historical world events.

On this day, Satan will gather the kings of the world to do battle in Jerusalem (Rev 16:14) to make one final attempt to wipe out the nation of Israel. However, his plans will be thwarted because on this day the Lord will go forth and fight for Israel (Zech 14:3), executing the kings of many nations (Ps 110:5-6), and the nations that gather against Jerusalem will be severely injured (Zech 12:3). On this day the land will be drenched with blood, for it is the day of the Lord's vengeance for the cause of Zion (Is 34:8; Rev 14:20).

The details of this battle are illustrated by the Lord saying, "**I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.**" This describes mass confusion and hysteria as the Lord comes back to judge the nations. Ezekiel says that on that day, there will be such a great earthquake in the land of Israel that every creature will quake at the presence of the Lord; that the Lord will reign down hailstones, fire, and brimstone upon the enemies of Israel. Finally, he says, in the same language of Haggai, that every man's sword will be against his brother.

Now, you may be asking yourself, what is the purpose of God setting this up in such a complex way? The purpose of this battle is for God to make himself known in the sight of many nations (Eze 38:19-23).

Many times in the history of the Jewish people, they have been captured, plundered, and even conquered by their enemies. Each time this happens, their enemies boast against the God of Israel, claiming they serve superior deities. This line of thinking is reasonable: If Israel's God is truly the most powerful, how could he let his people go through such

calamities? On this day, the nations will understand that Israel went into captivity because they rebelled against the Lord, so he gave them into the hands of their adversaries (Eze 39:23). Yahweh is not a weak God.

For thousands of years, God's name has been blasphemed on the earth. To this day, Jesus is still the despised and rejected one amongst the human race (Is 53:3). On this day, his name will be proved holy among the nations. The world will see how gracious God was in giving humanity thousands of years to continue to reject his Son. All of the signs and prophecies meant to warn the nations before his second coming will show that he is a loving God who takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Eze 33:11). Finally, this day will reveal how mighty and holy he is, when his name is hallowed, by the destruction and judgment of these nations (Eze 38:16). On this day the pride of man will finally be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted (Isaiah 2:17). This is the end of man's day; this is the end of the Satanic rebellion started by the Devil in the Garden of Eden; this is the great and terrible day of the Lord (Joel 2:31).

There is immense value in studying Christ's first and second comings. When we understand the first coming, we can present to the world a loving savior who died to reconcile his enemies to God (Romans 5:10). When we understand the second coming, we can be like John the Baptist warning people to flee from the wrath to come (Matthew 3:7). Understand that as terrible as the day of the Lord sounds, it is nothing compared to the lake of fire. Christians are not called to warn people about the terrors of the tribulation, but rather the terrors of suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 1:7). They are called to do this so that people might fear the Lord, for it is a fearful thing to fall into his hands (Hebrews 10:31).

Haggai Chapter 2:23

The Construction of The Millennial Kingdom

On that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you,'" declares the LORD of hosts.

Haggai concludes with a final word of encouragement for Zerubbabel, who is a type of foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ. The verse begins with **on that day**; this is the day revealed in the preceding verses as the day of the Lord (Hag 2:20-22). A time when God will shake the heavens and the earth, overthrowing the governments of the world to prepare the way for the messianic kingdom. The great day when the mystery of God is finished, the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and Jesus finally takes his great power and reigns over the earth (Rev 10:7; 11:15-18).

We see that the Lord calls Zerubbabel his **servant** and says he is **chosen**. This should reveal that the Lord is not merely speaking about Zerubbabel here because these are distinctly messianic titles. The Prophet Isaiah, writing about the Messiah, describes him as the **chosen servant** whom God delights in (Is 42:1). He writes that the coming servant will be a light to the nations, bringing salvation to the earth (Is 49:6), that he would open the eyes of the blind (Is 42:7). Most importantly that he would justify many people by bearing their iniquities (Is 53:11). Clearly, he was not speaking about Zerubbabel who is merely a type, but rather Jesus who is the light of the world. During the transfiguration, a voice came from heaven saying, "This is my Son, My **Chosen One**" (Lk 9:35). Jesus, in the truest sense, is the chosen servant of the Lord. Paul tells us that Christ became a **servant** to the Jewish people to confirm the promises regarding the Messiah (Rom 15:8) and that he took the form of a **bondservant** and humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death on a cross (Phil 2:7-8).

Abraham, David, the nation of Israel, and the Church are also called **servants and chosen** by God (Gen 26:24; Jer 33:26; Is 41:8; Dt 7:6; 1 Pet 2:9). Every saint is truly a servant of and chosen by God. The Prophet Malachi reveals that the day of the Lord will distinguish between those who serve God and those who do not (Mal 3:18). However, all of God's children, regardless of their dispensation, were chosen in Christ. Christ is the ultimate servant of the Lord; God chose him, and we have been chosen in him before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4).

On the day of the Lord, he will **take Zerubbabel and make him like a signet ring**, which was a sign of the king's authority; it bore the king's seal. When Joseph was made second in command of Egypt, he was given the signet ring of Pharaoh, and the Egyptians were commanded to obey him (Gen 41:41-43). Therefore, whoever has the signet ring of God has been delegated the authority and power of the kingdom of God. Prior to the captivity in Babylon, Zerubbabel's grandfather Coniah was also described as a signet ring. However, he was described as a signet ring that was taken off by God, meaning his authority was taken away due to his rebellion (Jer 22:24-30).

This promise establishes Zerubbabel as the official representative of the Davidic dynasty through which the Messiah would ultimately come. The Lord is reiterating the unconditional promises made to King David that his kingdom would endure forever and that he would never lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel (Jer 33:17). All of God's promises find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ (2 Cor 1:20), who was given the throne of his Father David and whose kingdom will never end (Lk 1:32-33).

These final words from Haggai starkly contrast the doomed thrones of the nations with the throne of David, which will be exalted. The message is that on the day of the Lord, when all of the world governments have their authority taken away (Dan 2:44), the Lord will preserve the nation of Israel and delegate to the Davidic king the kingdom's authority. However, Zerubbabel died long before the day of the Lord, and he never reached anything this significant in his time. We must understand that the message speaks of Zerubbabel as a type of Christ and a saint who receives authority in him.

Scripture is clear that all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus (Mt 28:18). The message reveals that when Christ who is of the

Davidic line through Zerubbabel takes back the dominion on earth, he will then delegate authority to his saints (Dan 7:27). Jesus will rule the earth, from the Davidic throne in Jerusalem with a rod of iron (Ps 2:9). Israel will again be the leader of the nations (Zech 8:23), and the Church will also be given authority to reign with Christ (Rev 2:26). For it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom (Lk 12:32). We see a clear line of authority from God to the mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Then, finally, to the saints, whether of the nation of Israel or the Church, we all have an inheritance in the kingdom of God through faith in Jesus Christ, who is the greater Zerubbabel.

Christians are being conformed into the image of Jesus as he will be the firstborn among many brethren (Rom 8:29). We see a glorious unity between Christ and his saints (John 17:23). Jesus is a king, and we are being made into a kingdom, Jesus is our great high priest, and we too will be priests of God. Jesus is chosen and the saints are as well. Jesus is the **chosen** redeemer, and we are the chosen redeemed. Jesus is a **servant**, and the saints are as well. Jesus receives the **signet ring** of authority from his Father, and the saints are also delegated authority.

Culmination and Review

Now, let us take a few moments and conclude with a summary of what we have learned from Haggai. Remember, the beleaguered and impoverished Jewish people have returned to their native land after 70 years of captivity in Babylon. They had begun to rebuild the temple and, after meeting resistance, ceased activity for well over a decade. The ministry of Haggai began in 520 B.C. Haggai delivered five messages to the nation over just four months. His sole priority was to encourage the people to resume temple reconstruction immediately. In our temple series, we learned that the temples of the Bible are meant to guide humanity back into dwelling with God as we initially did in the Garden of Eden. The temple represents God's house or dwelling place, and all of the temples point towards reconciliation with God through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev 21:3).

The first message from Haggai on August 29th, 520 B.C., was a swift rebuke for the people's indifference towards rebuilding the temple. The nation was struggling with severe poverty, and the Lord told them to consider their ways. Haggai reveals to them that the reason for their circumstances is that they cared more about their own homes than the house of the Lord. He then commands them to gather supplies and rebuild the temple immediately. Haggai reminds them that the purpose of rebuilding the temple is so that God might be glorified. As previously mentioned, every temple points towards Jesus, and the glory of God shines brightest in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 4:6).

The second message came about 23 days later, on September 21st, 520 B.C., when the Lord merely said, "I am with you." This was meant to encourage the nation that Yahweh would not forsake them. The nation experienced a genuine revival over this short period of three weeks. They feared the word of the Lord, showed reverence for God, and, by the gracious operation of God's spirit, began to rebuild the temple. All of the revivals in the Old Testament, including this one, led to a reestablishment of the sacrificial system, which points towards Jesus, our Passover lamb who was sacrificed for us (1 Cor 5:7).

The third message came about three weeks later, on October 17th, 520 B.C. Some of the older Israelites who had seen the glory of the Solomonic temple were upset over Zerubbabel's lesser temple in comparison. The Lord encourages the people not to fall into despair but instead to work hardily. Haggai reminds them that the same God that led the Hebrews out of slavery to Egypt is abiding in their midst now. He finishes the message with a glimpse into the future, describing a time when the Lord will overthrow the gentile kingdoms of the world to make way for the messianic kingdom. The Lord promises that this beleaguered nation will once again rule; the wealth of all her enemies will be given over to her; the glory of this temple will far exceed Solomon's; and finally, that a time of great peace is coming for the nation. This will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ, when he will overthrow the governments of the world and rule from Jerusalem in his temple, with all of the nation's streaming up to him so that they might hear his words (Is 2:2).

The fourth message came roughly two months later, on December 18th, 520 B.C., to remind them of why they were experiencing economic

hardship. The Lord begins by giving them an object lesson regarding the ceremonial law. He proves to the people that holiness is not communicated, whereas unholiness is. This lesson can be learned quite easily from nature: you can catch a sickness, but you cannot catch health. Therefore, if something holy is tainted, it immediately becomes unholy, whereas if something unholy touches something holy, it does not become holy. He then explains that the entire nation had become unholy because it neglected to rebuild the Lord's temple. They wanted to offer sacrifices to God but were not willing to rebuild. The Lord would not accept a mere outward form of religion devoid of faithful, heartfelt obedience. Haggai told the people that with that attitude towards God, everything they offer is unclean; this is why the nation was experiencing poor crops and severe economic poverty. However, now that the people have repented and demonstrated repentance by rebuilding over several months, the Lord promises they will be blessed from that day onward.

The fifth and final message came on the same day as the fourth. The Lord not only promised to bless them moving forward but also once again gave them a glimpse into the future, with more details surrounding the messianic age to come. This message was addressed to Zerubbabel alone as he was of the Davidic line, foreshadowing the Lord Jesus Christ. Haggai reiterates the same terminology from his third message several months prior, which states that the Lord will shake the heavens and the earth at his second coming. He goes on to reveal that on the day of the Lord, the satanic authority behind the governments of the world will be destroyed. This will be fulfilled at the battle of Armageddon when the armies of the world will be gathered on the plain of Megiddo and annihilated. The final verse of this book then promises that amidst the overthrow of the kingdoms of the world, the Lord will once again exalt the throne of David and return the authority to Israel with Christ sitting on his throne in Jerusalem. The times of the Gentiles will come to an end, Israel will once again rule, and Christ will be King over all the earth.

My goal with this commentary has been to help illuminate the glories of the coming kingdom for both the Church and Israel. We all have a part to play in the kingdom of God. Israel is that chosen nation through which the Messiah, according to the flesh, was born and to which he will return to reign over the earth. The church is that foolish nation that is not a nation; men chosen from every tribe, tongue, and language of the world

gathered into the flock of God. Although distinct, both groups are purchased with the blood of Jesus and will be married to God by eternal covenant.

In the age to come, Christ will reign from his millennial temple for 1000 years, and the Church and Israel will serve and reign with him as we receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Hag 2:7; Heb 12:26-27). The Millennial Kingdom will then launch us into eternity as we inherit the new heavens and earth, where there will be no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb will be its temple (Rev 21:22). We will dwell with God in perfect unity again as we did in the Garden of Eden. We will finally see God face to face (Rev 22:4).

In conclusion, my dear friends, if you forget everything you have learned from this book, please always remember this. Jesus Christ is building a kingdom, and he has died for his enemies so that they might be forgiven and become his subjects. Let that be your anthem as you make your pilgrimage through this world, and never forget that this place is not your home. The King has died for his own subjects. You are citizens of heaven; you are ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is coming back in vengeance (2 Thess 1:7). Let this be your banner as you continue your pilgrimage through this earth and press on toward glory.

The King Has Died For His Own Subjects...

Mark 1:15 The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.
