

## Book of Haggai

### Chapter 2:1-23

#### Second of the Four Messages Given by The Lord Through Haggai (1:1-9)

(October 17, 520 BC)

<sup>1</sup> On the twenty-first of the seventh month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet saying, <sup>2</sup> "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people saying, <sup>3</sup> '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?'

**On the twenty-first of the seventh month** > October 17, 520 BC

**Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory ...** > **Ezra 3:12, 13** > <sup>12</sup> Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy, <sup>13</sup> so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away.

**Wiersbe** > Rather than ignore the problem of discouragement that was sure to come when the people contrasted the two temples, the prophet faced the problem head-on. He (The Lord, see verse 1) picked an important day on which to deliver his message: October 17, the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. ("booths" ... see Barnes below) This feast was devoted to praising God for the harvest and for remembering Israel's pilgrim days in the wilderness (Lev. 23:34-43). But the important thing about the date was this: It was during the Feast of Tabernacles that King Solomon had dedicated the original temple (1 Kings 8:2), and Haggai (The Lord, see verse 1) wanted the people to think about that. The restored building had nothing of the splendor of Solomon's temple, but it was still God's house, built according to His plan and for His glory. The same ministry would be performed at its altars and the same worship presented to the Lord. Times change, but ministry goes on.

**Barnes** > The eighth day was to be a sabbath, with its "holy convocation," but the commemorative feast, the dwelling in booths, in memory of God's bringing them out of Egypt, was to last seven days. The close then of this feast could not but revive their sadness at the glories of their first deliverance by God's "mighty hand and outstretched arm," and their present fewness and poverty.

Remember the significance of the Feast of Tabernacles ... the living in booths for the week. (Chosen People) During this time the Jewish community builds temporary shelters (*sukkot*) to remind each generation that their forefathers lived as nomads, wandering in the desert for forty years.

**Leviticus 23:42-43** > <sup>42</sup> *You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths,* <sup>43</sup> *so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. **I am the Lord your God.***” (This promise comes up in verse 4 > *For I am with you.*)

Were you aware there have been only two temples ... not three. This temple is referred to as the “Second Temple”. “Herod’s Temple” was actually a complete renovation of this temple.

**Wikipedia** > However, during the reign of Herod the Great, the Second Temple was completely refurbished, and the original structure was totally overhauled into the large and magnificent edifices and facades that are more recognizable. Much as the Babylonians destroyed the **First Temple**, the Romans destroyed the **Second Temple** and Jerusalem in 70 CE as retaliation for an ongoing Jewish revolt. The second temple lasted for a total of 585 years (516 BCE to 70 CE)

<sup>4</sup> *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. <sup>5</sup> **‘As for the promise which I made** you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!’*

**For I am with you** > (Bible.org) - This phrase goes back to Ex 19:4-6; 29:45; 33:12f, and Isa 63:11-14. In those passages you have God promising Moses that He would be with the Israelites. The Isaiah passage says it was the Spirit of God in their midst that protected and provided for them.

**Exodus 19:4-6** (as the children of Israel came into the wilderness) > <sup>4</sup> *‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. <sup>5</sup> Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”*

**Exodus 29:45** (at the institution of the priests) > <sup>45</sup> *I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God*

**Promise** > (Strong's) to cut (off, down or asunder); by implication, to destroy or consume; specifically, to covenant (i.e. make an alliance or bargain, originally by cutting flesh and passing between the pieces) (Take a look at Exodus 19:4-6 and you'll see it is a covenant)

**As for the promise which I made** > (Barnes) The words stand more forcibly, because abruptly. The more exact idiom would have been "Remember," "take to heart."

<sup>6</sup> *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. <sup>7</sup> 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.*

**Shake** > (Strong's) to undulate

**Barnes** > And yet, whatever preludes of fulfillment there were at our Lord's first coming, they were as nothing to the fulfillment which we look for in the second, "*when **Isaiah 24:19-20** the earth shall be utterly broken down; the earth, clean dissolved; the earth, moved exceedingly; the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a hanging-cot in a vineyard and the transgression thereof is heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again;*"

**They will come with the wealth of all nations** > The word translated as *wealth* is defined in **Strong's** as *delight ... desire, goodly, pleasant, precious*. The word is translated multiple ways across the various English translations > *Treasures (18x), Desire (17x), Wealth (8x), Precious (2x), Desire and Precious (2x), Riches (1x) and Valuable (1x)*

**Clarke** > This is a difficult place if understood of a person: but (the Hebrew word for) *desire*, cannot well agree with (the Hebrew words for) *they shall come ...* All are puzzled with it. But the principal difficulty lies in the verb (plural words in the Hebrew) *they shall come*. If we found (the Hebrew words) in the singular, then it would read as in our text, *And the Desire of all nations shall come*: but no such reading appears in any MS.; nor is it fairly acknowledged, except by the Vulgate, which reads, *Et veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus*,

On the other hand > **Wolf** > "It is well to remember ... that from earliest days the majority of Christian interpreters followed the Jewish tradition in referring the passage to the coming of Israel's Messiah."

***8 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts. 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 silver is Mine and the gold is Mine ...*** > (Bible.org) Who was responsible for the building project going on at the time of Herod? *Herod* was and he used the money of the Gentiles. Guess what is said here in (vs 7) and in the book of Zechariah about the ultimate temple > the finances of the world would build that temple. And Herod's temple was said to be more glorious than Solomon's. God was ready for the nation of Israel to accept Jesus as the Messiah. This prophecy would have been fulfilled if they had accepted Him at His first coming.

***And in this place I will give peace*** > (Benson) > The glory of this second temple shall exceed that of the former, not in riches or costly ornaments, but in this, that there the prince of peace shall make his appearance, and there the gospel of peace shall be preached and published. See Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:5; Ephesians 2:14.

***Isaiah 9:6*** > *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

***Micah 5:5*** > *This One will be our peace. When the Assyrian invades our land, when he tramples on our <sup>[a]</sup>citadels, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight leaders of men.*

***Ephesians 2:14*** > <sup>14</sup>*For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,*

### ***Third of the Four Messages Given by The Lord Through Haggai (1:10-19)***

*(December 18, 520 BC)*

<sup>10</sup> ***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,* <sup>11</sup> *"Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Ask now the priests for a ruling: <sup>12</sup> 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."* <sup>13</sup> *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."*

***On the twenty-fourth of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius > December 18, 520 BC***

There are two views of thought as to what the Lord was trying to teach by these questions. **Constable** delineates both of those views in his comments ... (1.) The people were apparently thinking that since they were working on the holy temple all that they contacted and did became holy. (2.) Another view is that the Lord sought to discourage His people from taking gifts from pagan rulers and using them to build the temple

<sup>14</sup> *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.*

I am not finding it in the commentaries so I may be wrong ... but it appears to me that some thing happened on December 18, 520 BC that was different than before. I believe (and I may be wrong) that there was a change of heart this day. If so – it explains the rest of the message. The Lord doesn’t say “was” ... He says “is”.

<sup>15</sup> ***But now, do consider from this day onward:*** *before one stone was placed on another in the temple of the LORD, <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>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.*

***But now, do consider from this day onward*** > December 18, 520 BC ... or October 17, 520 BC? On October 17 they started laying the foundation. Prior to that time the grain failed, the wine was short, there was mildew and hail. BUT as you read vs. 18 and 19 below He (the Lord) indicates they still haven’t seen the blessings. Why? My opinion is that their actions were right ... but their heart had not changed.

Most of the commentators feel (and they may be right) that *from this day onward* refers to a start point of October 17 when they laid the foundation of the temple. But that doesn’t answer verses 18 and 19 below.

**Onward** > (Strong’s) the upper part, used only adverbially with prefix upward, above, overhead, from the top, etc. ... above, exceeding(-ly), forward.

<sup>18</sup> *‘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: <sup>19</sup>**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.**’*

***Is the seed still in the barn?*** > (Barnes) He would then say, that even in these last months, since they had begun the work, there were as yet no signs for the better. There was yet no "seed in the barn," the harvest having been blighted and the fruit-trees stripped by the hail before the close of the sixth month, when they resumed the work. Yet though there were as yet no signs of change, no earnest that the promise should be fulfilled, God pledges His word, "from this day I will bless you."

***Fourth of the Four Messages Given by The Lord Through Haggai (1:20-23)***

*(December 18, 520 BC)*

<sup>20</sup> *Then the word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the **twenty-fourth day of the month**, saying, <sup>21</sup> "Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah, saying, 'I am going to **shake** the heavens and the earth.*

***On the twenty-fourth of the month*** > December 18, 520 BC

***Shake*** > (Strong's) to undulate

**Barnes** > Haggai closes by resuming the words of a former prophecy to Zerubbabel and Joshua (verse 6 above), which ended in the coming of Christ. Even thus it is plain, that the prophecy does not belong personally to Zerubbabel, but to him and his descendants, chiefly to Christ.

<sup>22</sup> ***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.'***

**Barnes** > The overthrow prophesied is also universal. It is not one throne only, as of Persia, but "the throne," i. e., the sovereigns, "of kingdoms;" not a change of dynasty, but a destruction of their "strength;" not of a few powers only, but "the kingdoms of the pagan;" and that, in detail; that, in which their chief strength lay, the chariots and horsemen and their riders, and this, man by man, "everyone by the sword of his brother." This mutual destruction is a feature of the judgments at the end of the world against Gog and Magog.

***Ezekiel 38:21*** > "I will call for a sword against him on all My mountains," declares the Lord GOD. "Every man's sword will be against his brother.

<sup>23</sup> ***'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.

***And I will make you like a signet ring*** > (Constable) A signet ring was what kings used to designate royal authority and personal ownership. God had chosen Zerubbabel to designate royal authority and personal ownership, namely, the coming Messiah. ... It is clear that this figure of a signet ring views Zerubbabel as the descendant of David and Jehoiachin through whom God would provide the victory promised in Haggai 2:21-22. He will do that not through Zerubbabel personally but through one of his descendants, namely, Jesus Christ.

The curse on Jehoiachin that none of his descendants would sit on David's throne or rule in Judah (Jeremiah 22:30 see below) may have referred to his immediate descendants (i.e, children). (There might be an easier answer\*)

**Jeremiah 22:24, 25** > <sup>30</sup> *"Thus says the LORD, 'Write this man down childless, a man who will not prosper in his days; for no man of his descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.'"*

(\*Let's look at ***I Chronicles 3:17-19*** with regards to who was Zerubbabel's biological father. Every other passage ... including Matthew and Luke ... lists his father as Shealtiel. But the Chronicle passage has a different take > <sup>17</sup> *The sons of Jeconiah, the prisoner, were **Shealtiel** his son, <sup>18</sup> and Malchiram, **Pedaiah**, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and Nedabiah. <sup>19</sup> The sons of **Pedaiah** were **Zerubbabel** and Shimei.*

Another legitimate, possible explanation to the differences in the aforementioned verses involves a Law of Moses with which many are unfamiliar—the levirate marriage law.

According to ***Deuteronomy 25:5-6*** > *If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel* (emp. added; cf. Matthew 22:24-26).

If Shealtiel had been married, yet died prior to siring a son, his brother Pedaiah may have taken Shealtiel's wife to be his wife. If such was the case, their firstborn son (Zerubbabel) would be called after Shealtiel, not Pedaiah (even though, in the strict biological sense, Zerubbabel would be Pedaiah's son).