

Hag. 2:1 In the seventh *month*, in the one and twentieth *day* of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai, saying,

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

The message of this chapter comes approximately a month after the close of the previous chapter. Again, emphasis is made that the message delivered by Haggai is from YHWH. As in the first message, it is directed to Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest, the governmental and religious leaders of the people. This time, however, address is included to the rest of the people. Why? I think because of the change of heart as described in the last chapter.

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

The Lord brings up a painful thought. He reminds them that this temple is nothing compared to the beautiful temple of Solomon that was destroyed by the armies of Babylon. Ezra confirms this as a painful memory to those who had lived to return from the captivity.

Ezra 3:12 But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice;

We are so prone to make judgments according to physical appearances, and that is totally wrong. God was clear in establishing the truth that He looks on the heart of a man—not his outward appearance.

1Sam. 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

We tend to think a ministry is successful according to its size and wealth. The Lord was clear in His letter to Smyrna that though they considered themselves poor, He considered them as rich.

Rev. 2:9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich)....

We are so prone to look at things from eyes of flesh and the mindset of the world. We need to learn to look at things through God's eyes. God is looking for a response from His people that declares their love for and obedience to Him as Lord. That truth was emphasized by the Apostle John.

1John 2:5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

1John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1John 2:16 For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

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

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

The beautiful truth that God declares—What matters most is that “I am with you,” God says. It’s not the beauty of the building that matters; it’s the God that building honors that makes the difference. In spite of their unfaithfulness, God reminds them that He is a covenant-keeping God; He will honor the covenant established with them when they came out of Egypt. I think these verses in Leviticus describe it best.

Lev. 26:44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I *am* the LORD their God.

Lev. 26:45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I *am* the LORD.

God is always faithful—even when His people are not.

Hag. 2:6 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;

Hag. 2:7 And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

These verses are very familiar in my study of prophecy regarding the return of Messiah Jesus as King of kings. I believe that has to be the main subject of this prophecy since it will result in God filling the temple with glory. Although Jesus brought glory to the temple by His very presence there during His first coming, it is His second coming that will result in God’s glory being restored to the temple as it was in the time of Solomon. It is His second coming that will be preceded by a shaking of the heavens, earth, sea and dry land as so vividly detailed in the book of Revelation.

My focus has always been on the physical impact on the planet. Creation will be shaken as God pours out His wrath in judgment upon the nations of the earth. The thing that stands out to me now is that the Lord’s coming is described as “the desire of all nations.” I think the word *desire* could only apply to those who have turned to God in faith during that time. Though it is true that this has been the desire of the church since its beginnings (and it is true that the church is composed of people from all nations), the Lord is clear that His wrath is reserved for His enemies, the wicked.

Nah. 1:2 God *is* jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and *is* furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.

So even though this could be a reference to the desire of the “church,” the church will not be here to experience the wrath of the day of the Lord that precedes His coming. (7/08) The nations here would refer to the body of believers that come to faith during the tribulation, or 70th week of Daniel. This period will include the time of wrath prophesied by Isaiah.

Is. 13:11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Is. 13:12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

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

Always of interest is the difference in God's perspective on time and ours—"it is a little while," and it's already been over 2500 years since Haggai made this prophecy.

Hag. 2:8 The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

Hag. 2:9 The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

Staying in context, the Lord is saying that there is nothing you could use to make this temple more beautiful that I could not provide you. When the Lord returns to rule from the throne of David, that temple will have far greater glory than Solomon's temple. It will house the very throne of Messiah. When He establishes His kingdom, there will finally be peace in the land of Israel.

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

Hag. 2:11 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests *concerning* the law, saying,

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

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

Two months have passed since the previous message, and Haggai is given another word from YHWH. The Lord poses a couple of questions to the priests:

1. If you have holy flesh (from a sacrifice) in the skirt of your garment and your garment touches bread, pottage, wine, oil or meat, is it still holy? The priests answer, "No," according to the law.
2. If you have touched a dead body and then touch any food or drink, does it become unclean? Again, the priests answer according to the law, "Yes."

I liked David Guzik's summary of the principle: "Holiness is not 'contagious,' but impurity is."

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

Haggai then applies this truth to the people. He basically says, "Nothing about you is holy; everything you have to offer me is unclean."

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

Hag. 2:16 Since those *days* were, when *one* came to an heap of twenty *measures*, there were *but ten*: when *one* came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty *vessels* out of the press, there were *but twenty*.

Hag. 2:17 I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye *turned* not to me, saith the LORD.

Again, the Lord is asking them to remember and consider what He has taught them in this experience of building the temple. My paraphrase of His message: Remember that before you determined to honor Me and build My house, you were not very prosperous. I made sure that you weren't by preventing your crops from producing and by sending mildew and hail to destroy much of what did grow. I caused your labor to be unfruitful. Yet not once did you turn to me in faith and repentance.

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

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

The Lord continues His message; He basically says—Learn from your experience. Since deciding to honor me by building my house, though your barns are still empty of harvest and your fruit vines and trees have yet to produce a good crop, I am promising that from this day forward “I will bless you.” In other words, you will plant your seed and reap a good harvest and your fruit vines and trees will produce and provide all that you need.

Hag. 2:20 And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying,

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

Hag. 2:22 And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

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

Now the Lord has a special message for Zerubbabel, the governor. Verses 21-23 seem to go hand-in-hand with verses 6-7. This prophecy was obviously not fulfilled in Zerubbabel's time. So how does it apply? I had to go to the commentaries for help. It made sense to me to understand Zerubbabel as a type of Jesus. As the governor, he represented the ruler of Israel. In the day that Messiah comes to take His throne, He will fulfill the promise represented by Zerubbabel as God's signet ring, the ring of God's authority. In that day, the powers of the heathen kingdoms on earth will be destroyed and their militaries destroyed by the word of God, and Jesus, the rightful King of Israel, will take His throne.

My how blessed Haggai was to see a positive response to his ministry—a privilege not enjoyed by many of the prophets.