**Haggai Commentary**

**Haggai Chapter 1**

Hag 1:1

**“In the second year of Darius.”** Many scholars have concluded that the date in Haggai 1:1 is August 29, 520 BC. Since the Temple was burned in 586 BC, it had remained destroyed for 66 years. The fact that Haggai records this as the sixth month of Darius, we can tell he is using Nisan (Abib) as the first month of the year.

Hag 1:4

**“this house.”** The Temple. The Temple was called “the house of God,” or simply, “the house.”

Hag 1:14

**“Joshua.”** The High Priest (see commentary on Zech. 3:1, “Joshua”).

**Haggai Chapter 2**

Hag 2:2

**“Joshua.”** The High Priest (see commentary on Zech. 3:1, “Joshua”).

Hag 2:3

**“this house.”** The Temple was often called “the house of God” or simply the “house,” as it is here.

**“in its former glory.”** That is, before it was burned to the ground by Nebuchadnezzar, and all the Temple vessels, such as the bronze sea, bronze pillars, etc., were carried off to Babylon (2 Kings 25:8-15). The Babylonian Captivity was 70 years, so although there were some people in the audience who had seen the Temple when they were small children, they would be very old at the time of Haggai.

Hag 2:4

**“Joshua.”** The High Priest (see commentary on Zech. 3:1, “Joshua”).

Hag 2:6

**“the heavens and…and…and the dry land.”** The repetition of “and” before every point is the figure polysyndeton. The “and” before each word emphasizes each point.

[See Word Study: “Syndeton.”]

Hag 2:7

**“The desired of all nations will come.”** The desired of the nations is the Messiah. Haggai does not say or imply that the coming of the Messiah will be in two stages, a first coming in which he is killed and a second coming in which he conquers the earth and sets up his kingdom. The book of Haggai focuses on the Tribulation, which is the major subject of the book of Revelation, and Christ’s second coming at which time he will conquer the earth and set up his kingdom on earth.

[For more on Christ setting up a kingdom on earth, see Appendix 5: “Christ’s Future Kingdom on Earth.”]

**“and I will fill this house with glory.”** When Jesus comes and conquers the earth and sets up his kingdom, he will build the Temple and it will be filled with glory due to the presence of God. What Haggai did not mention was that the Temple that was being rebuilt in his time would be destroyed (which it was in AD 70), but when Jesus came back he would build another Temple (see commentary on Ezek. 40:5). Haggai says that “this house” (this Temple) will be filled with glory because even though the Temple will be new, it will be built on the same place as the Temple that Haggai and those with him were looking at, it will be built on top of Mount Zion. Some scholars do not believe there will be a Millennial Temple, and that references to it refer to the Church, but in saying “I will fill THIS HOUSE with glory,” Haggai makes it clear that there will be a literal Millennial Temple, and that Temple is described in Ezekiel 40-48, which speak of things that will happen in the Millennial Kingdom.

Hag 2:8

**“The silver is mine, and the gold is mine.”** The people were poor and Zerubbabel’s Temple was nothing spectacular, so the people could easily wonder how the future Temple could be filled with glory. But God makes it clear that the silver and gold are His, and so the glory of the future Temple will be greater than the “former” Temple, Solomon’s Temple, as Haggai 2:9 says.

Hag 2:9

**“The latter glory of this house.”** The context indicates that this “latter glory” will occur in the Millennial Kingdom and refers to the Millennial Temple described in Ezekiel 40-47. Because of the sin of the leaders and people, the glory left the Temple and Jerusalem (cf. Ezek. 11:23 and commentary on Ezek. 11:23). It will not return until the Millennial Temple described in Ezekiel 40-47 (cf. Ezek. 43:2-5; 44:4).

[For more on the Millennial Kingdom, Christ’s 1,000-year reign on earth, see Appendix 5: “Christ’s Future Kingdom on Earth.”]

**“this house.”** The Temple was referred to as “the house,” i.e., the house of God.

**“the former.”** The former “house” was Solomon’s Temple.

**“prosperity.”** The standard rendering of the Hebrew word *shalom* is “peace,” but it means much more than that; it means peace, well-being, wholeness, prosperity. Especially in a context like this, “peace” is too limited. God is promising that in the future Jerusalem, there will be *shalom*, prosperity, well-being. Of course, this could only happen in a time of peace, so peace is certainly included. There are many prophecies of prosperity and well-being in the future earthly Kingdom of Christ. The NRSV and Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible also say “prosperity.”

Hag 2:13

**“If someone who is unclean because of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean? … It will.”** If something unclean touches something that is Levitically clean, the clean thing becomes unclean. Uncleanness is communicable. That is very clear in the Mosaic Law (see commentary on Lev. 6:18).

Hag 2:23

**“signet.”** Here it seems that the “signet” was a signet ring, which was a ring that was engraved with special letters and/or characters that identified the owner of the ring. The owner of the ring would use it as a stamp of authority, and that is what Yahweh is saying to Shealtiel, that he would have authority to act for Yahweh.

[For more on signet rings and cylinder seals, see commentary on Gen. 41:42.]