

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

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INTRODUCTION

THE name *Haggai* means “my feast”; given, according to COCCEIUS, in anticipation of the joyous return from exile. He probably was one of the Jewish exiles (of the tribes Judah, Benjamin, and Levi) who returned under Zerubbabel, the civil head of the people, and Joshua, the high priest, 536 B.C., when Cyrus (actuated by the striking prophecies as to himself, ^{<3428>}Isaiah 44:28 45:1) granted them their liberty, and furnished them with the necessaries for restoring the temple (^{<4822>}2 Chronicles 36:23 ^{<4500>}Ezra 1:1 2:2). The work of rebuilding went on under Cyrus and his successor Cambyses (called Ahasuerus in ^{<4506>}Ezra 4:6) in spite of opposition from the Samaritans, who, when their offers of help were declined, began to try to hinder it. These at last obtained an interdict from the usurper Smerdis the Magian (called Artaxerxes in ^{<4507>}Ezra 4:7-23), whose suspicions were easy to rouse. The Jews thereupon became so indifferent to the work that when Darius came to the throne (521 B.C.), virtually setting aside the prohibitions of the usurper, instead of recommencing their labors, they pretended that as the prophecy of *the seventy years* applied to the temple as well as to the captivity in Babylon (Haggai 1:2), they were only in the sixty-eighth year of it [HENDERSON]; so that, the proper time not having yet arrived, they might devote themselves to building splendid mansions for themselves. Haggai and Zechariah were commissioned by Jehovah (Haggai 1:1) in the second year of Darius (Hystaspes), 520 B.C., sixteen years after the return under Zerubbabel, to rouse them from their selfishness to resume the work which for fourteen years had been suspended. Haggai preceded Zechariah in the work by two months.

The dates of his four distinct prophecies are accurately given:

- (1) The first (Haggai 1:1-15), on the first day of the sixth month of the second year of Darius, 520 B.C., reproved the people for their apathy in allowing the temple to lie in ruins and reminded them of their ill success in everything because of their not honoring God as to His house. The

result was that twenty-four days afterwards they commenced building under Zerubbabel (^{<3012>}Haggai 1:12-15).

(2) The second, on the twenty-first day of the seventh month (Haggai 2:1-9), predicts that the glory of the new temple would be greater than that of Solomon's, so that the people need not be discouraged by the inferiority in outward splendor of the new, as compared with the old temple, which had so moved to tears the elders who had remembered the old (^{<1512>}Ezra 3:12,13). Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel had implied the same prediction, whence some had doubted whether they ought to proceed with a building so inferior to the former one; but Haggai shows wherein the superior glory was to consist, namely, in the presence of Him who is the "desire of all nations" (Haggai 2:7).

(3) The third, on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month (^{<3020>}Haggai 2:10-19), refers to a period when building materials had been collected, and the workmen had begun to put them together, from which time forth God promises His blessing; it begins with removing their past error as to the efficacy of mere outward observances to cleanse from the taint of disobedience as to the temple building.

(4) The fourth (^{<3023>}Haggai 2:20-23), on the same day as the preceding, was addressed to Zerubbabel, as the representative of the theocratic people, and as having asked as to the national revolutions spoken of in the second prophecy (Haggai 2:7).

The prophecies are all so brief as to suggest the supposition that they are only a summary of the original discourses. The space occupied is but three months from the first to the last.

The Jews' adversaries, on the resumption of the work under Zerubbabel, Haggai, and Zechariah, tried to set Darius against it; but that monarch confirmed Cyrus' decree and ordered all help to be given to the building of the temple (^{<1513>}Ezra 5:3, etc. ^{<1501>}Ezra 6:1,). So the temple was completed in the sixth year of Darius' reign 516-515 B.C. (^{<1514>}Ezra 6:14).

The style of Haggai is consonant with his messages: pathetic in exhortation, vehement in reproofs, elevated in contemplating the glorious future. The repetition of the same phrases (for example, "saith the Lord," or "the Lord of hosts," Haggai 1:2,5,7; and thrice in one verse, Haggai 2:4; so "the spirit," thrice in one verse, ^{<3014>}Haggai 1:14) gives a simple earnestness to his style, calculated to awaken the solemn attention of the people, and to awaken them from their apathy, to which also the interrogatory form, often adopted, especially tends. Chaldaisms occur (Haggai 2:3 2:6 2:16), as might have been expected in a writer who was so long in Chaldea. Parts are

purely prose history; the rest is somewhat rhythmical, and observant of poetic parallelism.

Haggai is referred to in ^{<1510E>}Ezra 5:1 6:14; and in the New Testament (^{<3922E>}Hebrews 12:26; compare Haggai 2:6,7,22).

CHAPTER 1

HAGGAI 1:1-15.

HAGGAI CALLS THE PEOPLE TO CONSIDER THEIR WAYS IN NEGLECTING TO BUILD GOD'S HOUSE: THE EVIL OF THIS NEGLECT TO THEMSELVES: THE HONOR TO GOD OF ATTENDING TO IT: THE PEOPLE'S PENITENT OBEDIENCE UNDER ZERUBBABEL FOLLOWED BY GOD'S GRACIOUS ASSURANCE.

1. *second year of Darius* — Hystaspes, the king of Medo-Persia, the second of the world empires, Babylon having been overthrown by the Persian Cyrus. The Jews having no king of their own, dated by the reign of the world kings to whom they were subject. Darius was a common name of the Persian kings, as Pharaoh of those of Egypt, and Caesar of those of Rome. The name in the cuneiform inscriptions at Persepolis is written *Daryawus*, from the root *Darh*, “to preserve,” the *Conservator* [LASSEN]. HERODOTUS [6.98] explains it *Coercer*. Often opposite attributes are assigned to the same god; in which light the Persians viewed their king. ^{<404F>}Ezra 4:24 harmonizes with Haggai in making this year the date of the resumption of the building.

sixth month — of the Hebrew year, not of Darius' reign (compare Zechariah 1:7 7:1,3 8:19). Two months later (“the eighth month,” Zechariah 1:1) Zechariah began to prophesy, seconding Haggai.

the Lord — *Hebrew*, JEHOVAH: God's covenant title, implying His unchangeableness, the guarantee of His faithfulness in keeping His promises to His people.

by Haggai — *Hebrew*, “in the hand of Haggai”; God being the real speaker, His prophet but the instrument (compare ^{<407S>}Acts 7:35 ^{<408F>}Galatians 3:19).

Zerubbabel — called also Shesh-bazzar in ^{<4508F>}Ezra 1:8 5:14,16, where the same work is attributed to Shesh-bazzar that in ^{<4508F>}Ezra 3:8 is attributed to Zerubbabel. Shesh-bazzar is probably his *Chaldean* name; as Belteshazzar was that of Daniel. Zerubbabel, his *Hebrew* name, means “one born in Babylon.”

son of Shealtiel — or Salathiel. But ^{<1387>}1 Chronicles 3:17,19 makes Pedaiah his father. Probably he was adopted by his *uncle* Salathiel, or Shealtiel, at the death of his father (compare ^{<4012>}Matthew 1:12 ^{<4187>}Luke 3:27).

governor of Judah — to which office Cyrus had appointed him. The *Hebrew Pechah* is akin to the original of the modern Turkish *Pasha*; one ruling a region of the Persian empire of less extent than that under a satrap.

Joshua — called Jeshua (^{<4502>}Ezra 2:2); so the son of Nun in ^{<4687>}Nehemiah 8:17.

Josedech — or Jehozadak (^{<1365>}1 Chronicles 6:15), one of those carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Haggai addresses the civil and the religious representatives of the people, so as to have them as his associates in giving God's commands; thus priest, prophet, and ruler jointly testify in God's name.

2. the Lord of hosts — Jehovah, Lord of the powers of heaven and earth, and therefore requiring implicit obedience.

This people — "This" sluggish and selfish "people." He does not say, *My* people, since they had neglected the service of God.

The time — the proper time for building the temple. Two out of the seventy predicted years of captivity (dating from the destruction of the temple, 558 B.C., ^{<4281>}2 Kings 25:9) were yet unexpired; this they make their plea for delay [HENDERSON]. The seventy years of captivity were completed long ago in the first year of Cyrus, 536 B.C. (^{<2090>}Jeremiah 29:10); dating from 606 B.C., Jehoiakim's captivity (^{<4862>}2 Chronicles 36:6). The seventy years to the completion of the temple (^{<2452>}Jeremiah 25:12) were completed this very year, the second of Darius [VATABLUS]. Ingenious in excuses, they pretended that the interruption in the work caused by their enemies proved it was *not yet the proper time*; whereas their real motive was selfish dislike of the trouble, expense, and danger from enemies. "God," say they, "hath interposed many difficulties to punish our rash haste" [CALVIN]. Smerdis' interdict was no longer in force, now that Darius the rightful king was on the throne; therefore they had no real excuse for not beginning at once to build. AUBERLEN denies that by "Artaxerxes" in ^{<4907>}Ezra 4:7-22 is meant Smerdis. Whether Smerdis or Artaxerxes Longimanus be meant, the interdict referred only to the rebuilding of the *city*, which the Persian kings feared might, if rebuilt, cause them trouble to subdue; not to the rebuilding of the *temple*. But the Jews were easily turned aside from the work. Spiritually, like the Jews, men do not say they will never be religious, but, it is not time yet. So the great work of life is left undone.

4. *Is it time* — It is not time (Haggai 1:2), ye say, to build Jehovah's house; yet how is it that ye make it a fit time not only to *build*, but to “dwell” at ease in your own houses?

you, O ye — rather, for “you, you”; the repetition marking the shameful contrast between their concern for *themselves*, and their unconcern for God [MAURER]. Compare a similar repetition in ^{<1023>}1 Samuel 25:24 Zechariah 7:5.

ceiled — rather, “wainscoted,” or “paneled,” referring to the walls as well as the ceilings; furnished not only with comfort but luxury, in sad contrast to God's house not merely unadorned, but the very walls not raised above the foundations. How different David's feelings (^{<1002>}2 Samuel 7:2)!

5. *Consider your ways* — literally, “Set your heart” on your ways. The *plural* implies, Consider both what ye have done (actively, ^{<2340>}Lamentations 3:40) and what ye have suffered (passively) [JEROME]. Ponder earnestly whether ye have gained by seeking self at the sacrifice of God.

6. Nothing has prospered with you while you neglected your duty to God. The punishment corresponds to the sin. They thought to escape poverty by not building, but keeping their money to themselves; God brought it on them *for* not building (^{<1137>}Proverbs 13:7 11:24 ^{<1053>}Matthew 6:33). Instead of cheating God, they had been only cheating themselves.

ye clothe ... but ... none warm — through insufficiency of clothing; as ye are unable through poverty from failure of your crops to purchase sufficient clothing. The verbs are infinitive, implying a *continued state*: “Ye have sown, and *been bringing in* but little; ye have *been eating*, but not to *being satisfied*; ye have *been drinking*, but not to *being filled*; ye have been *putting* on clothes, but not to *being warmed*” [MOORE]. Careful consideration of God's dealings with us will indicate God's will regarding us. The events of life are the hieroglyphics in which God records His feelings towards us, the key to which is found in the Bible [MOORE].

wages ... put ... into a bag with holes — proverbial for labor and money spent profitlessly (^{<3007>}Zechariah 8:10; compare ^{<2519>}Isaiah 55:2 ^{<3123>}Jeremiah 2:13). Contrast, spiritually, the “bags that wax not old, the treasure in heaven that faileth not” (^{<1233>}Luke 12:33). Through the high cost of necessaries, those who wrought for a day's wages parted with them at once, as if they had put them into a bag with holes.

8. *Go up to the mountain* — Moriah [ROSENMULLER]; Lebanon [HENDERSON]. Rather, generally, *the mountains* around, now covered with

wood, the growth of the long period of the captivity. So ^{<4085>}Nehemiah 8:15, “Go forth unto *the mount*,” that is, the neighboring hills [MAURER].

wood — Haggai specifies this as being the first necessary; not to the exclusion of other materials. *Stones* also were doubtless needed. That the old walls were not standing, as the Hebrew interpreters quoted by JEROME state, or the new walls partly built, appears from ^{<3028>}Haggai 2:18, where express mention is made of *laying the foundations*.

I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified — I will be propitious to suppliants in it (^{<10891>}1 Kings 8:30), and shall receive the honor due to Me which has been withheld. In neglecting the temple, which is the mirror of My presence, ye dishonor Me [CALVIN]; in its being built, ye shall glorify Me.

9. *Ye looked for much* — literally “looked” so as to turn your eyes “to much.” The *Hebrew* infinitive here expresses *continued* looking. Ye hoped to have your store made “much” by neglecting the temple. The greater was your greediness, the more bitter your disappointment in being poorer than ever.

when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it — even the little crop brought into your barns I *dissipated*. “I did blow upon,” that is, I scattered and caused to perish with My mere breath, as scattered and blighted corn.

mine house ... his own house — in emphatic antithesis.

ye run — expressing the keenness of everyone of them in pursuing their own selfish interests. Compare “run,” ^{<4932>}Psalm 119:32 ^{<2016>}Proverbs 1:16, contrasted with their apathy about God’s house.

10. *heaven ... is stayed from dew* — literally “stays itself.” Thus heaven or the sky is personified; implying that inanimate nature obeys Jehovah’s will; and, shocked at His people’s disobedience, withholds its goods from them (compare ^{<4122>}Jeremiah 2:12,13).

11. *I called* — what the “heaven” and “earth,” the second causes, were said to do (^{<3010>}Haggai 1:10), being the *visible* instruments, Jehovah, in this verse, the invisible first cause, declares to be His doing. He “calls for” famine, etc., as instruments of His wrath (^{<10002>}2 Kings 8:1 ^{<494516>}Psalm 105:16). The contrast is striking between the prompt obedience of these material agencies, and the slothful disobedience of living men, His people.

drought — *Hebrew, Choreb*, like in sound to *Chareeb*, “waste” (Haggai 1:4,9), said of God’s house; implying the correspondence between the sin and its punishment. Ye have let My house be *waste*, and I will send on all

that is yours a *wasting drought*. This would affect not merely the “corn,” etc., but also “men” and “cattle,” who must perish in the absence of the “corn,” etc., lost by the drought.

labor of the hands — all the fruits of lands, gardens, and vineyards, obtained by labor of the hands (^{<4833>}Deuteronomy 28:33 ^{<4784>}Psalms 78:46).

12. *remnant of the people* — all those who have returned from the exile (Zechariah 8:6).

as ... God sent him — according to all that Jehovah had enjoined him to speak. But as it is not till ^{<3014>}Haggai 1:14 after Haggai’s second message (^{<3013>}Haggai 1:13) that the people actually *obeyed*, MAURER translates here, “*hearkened to the voice of the Lord*,” and instead of “as,” “*because the Lord had sent him*.” However, *English Version* rightly represents their *purpose* of obedience as obedience in God’s eyes already, though not carried into effect till ^{<3014>}Haggai 1:14.

13. *the Lord’s messenger* — so the priests (Malachi 2:7) are called (compare ^{<6044>}Galatians 4:14 ^{<6025>}2 Peter 1:21).

in the Lord’s message — by the Lord’s authority and commission: on the Lord’s embassy.

I am with you — (^{<4833>}Matthew 28:20). On the people showing the mere disposition to obey, even before they actually set to work, God passes at once from the reproving tone to that of tenderness. He hastens as it were to forget their former unfaithfulness, and to assure them, when obedient, that He *both is and will be* with them: *Hebrew*, “I with you!” God’s presence is the best of blessings, for it includes all others. This is the sure guarantee of their success no matter how many their foes might be (^{<6033>}Romans 8:31). Nothing more inspires men and rouses them from torpor, than, when relying on the promises of divine aid, they have a sure hope of a successful issue [CALVIN].

14. *Lord stirred up the spirit of*, etc. — God gave them alacrity and perseverance in the good work, though slothful in themselves. Every good impulse and revival of religion is the direct work of God by His Spirit.

came and did work — collected the wood and stones and other materials (compare Haggai 1:8) for the work. Not actually built or “laid the (secondary) foundations” of the temple, for this was not done till three months after, namely, the twenty-fourth day of the *ninth* month (^{<3028>}Haggai 2:18) [GROTIUS].

15. *four and twentieth day* — twenty-three days after the first message of Haggai (Haggai 1:1).

CHAPTER 2

HAGGAI 2:1-9.

SECOND PROPHECY.

The people, discouraged at the inferiority of this temple to Solomon's, are encouraged nevertheless to persevere, because God is with them, and this house by its connection with Messiah's kingdom shall have a glory far above that of gold and silver.

1. *seventh month* — of the Hebrew year; in the second year of Darius reign (Haggai 1:1); not quite a month after they had begun the work (^{<3015>}Haggai 1:15). This prophecy was very shortly before that of Zechariah.

3. *Who is left ... that saw ... first glory* — Many elders present at the laying of the foundation of the second temple who had seen the first temple (^{<4582>}Ezra 3:12,13) in all its glory, wept at the contrast presented by the rough and unpromising appearance of the former in its beginnings. From the destruction of the first temple to the second year of Darius Hystaspes, the date of Haggai's prophecy, was a space of seventy years (^{<3812>}Zechariah 1:12); and to the first year of Cyrus, or the end of the captivity, fifty-two years; so that the elders might easily remember the first temple. The Jews note five points of inferiority: The absence from the second temple of

- (1) the sacred fire;
- (2) the Shekinah;
- (3) the ark and cherubim;
- (4) the Urim and Thummim;
- (5) the spirit of prophecy.

The connection of it with Messiah more than counterbalanced all these; for He is the antitype to all the five (Haggai 2:9).

how do ye see it now? — God's estimate of things is very different from man's (Zechariah 8:6; compare ^{<0937>}1 Samuel 16:7). However low their estimate of the present temple ("it") from its outward inferiority, God holds it superior (^{<3807>}Zechariah 4:10 ^{<4127>}1 Corinthians 1:27,28).

4. *be strong ... for I am with you* — The greatest *strength* is to have Jehovah with us as our strength. Not in man's "might," but in that of God's Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).

5. *According to the word that* — literally, "(I am with you) the word (or *thing*) which I covenanted"; that is, I am with you as I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt (^{<12916>}Exodus 19:5,6 34:10,11). The *covenant* promise of God to the elect people at Sinai is an additional motive for their persevering. The *Hebrew* for to "covenant" is literally "to cut," alluding to the sacrificial victims *cut* in ratification of a covenant.

so — or, "and."

my Spirit remaineth among you — to strengthen you for the work (^{<3014>}Haggai 1:14 Zechariah 4:6). The inspiration of Haggai and Zechariah at this time was a specimen of the presence of God's *Spirit* remaining still with His people, as He had been with Moses and Israel of old (^{<45101>}Ezra 5:1 ^{<23611>}Isaiah 63:11).

6. *Yet once, it is a little while* — or, "(it is) yet *a little while*." The *Hebrew* for "once" expresses the indefinite article "a" [MAURER]. Or, "it is yet *only* a little while"; literally, "one little," that is, a single brief space till a series of movements is to begin; namely, the shakings of nations soon to begin which are to end in the advent of Messiah, "the desire of all nations" [MOORE]. The *shaking of nations* implies judgments of wrath on the foes of God's people, to precede the reign of the Prince of peace (^{<23131>}Isaiah 13:13). The kingdoms of the world are but the scaffolding for God's spiritual temple, to be thrown down when their purpose is accomplished. The transitoriness of all that is earthly should lead men to seek "peace" in Messiah's everlasting kingdom (Haggai 2:9 ^{<51277>}Hebrews 12:27,28) [MOORE]. The Jews in Haggai's times hesitated about going forward with the work, through dread of the world power, Medo-Persia, influenced by the craft of Samaria. The prophet assures them this and all other world powers are to fall before Messiah, who is to be associated with this temple; therefore they need fear naught. So ^{<51226>}Hebrews 12:26, which quotes this passage; the apostle compares the heavier punishment which awaits the disobedient under the New Testament with that which met such under the Old Testament. At the establishment of the Sinaitic covenant, only the earth was shaken to introduce it, but now heaven and earth and all things are to be shaken, that is, along with prodigies in the world of nature, all kingdoms that stand in the way of Messiah's kingdom, "which cannot be shaken," are to be upturned (^{<21255>}Daniel 2:35,44 ^{<41244>}Matthew 21:44). ^{<51227>}Hebrews 12:27, "Yet *once more*," favors *English Version*. Paul condenses together the two verses of Haggai (Haggai 2:6,7, and ^{<51021>}Haggai 2:21,22), implying that it

was one and the same shaking, of which the former verses of Haggai denote the beginning, the latter the end. The shaking began introductory to the first advent; it will be finished at the second. Concerning the former, compare ^{<40B7>}Matthew 3:17 27:51 28:2 ^{<41D>}Acts 2:2 4:31; concerning the latter, ^{<1B4E>}Matthew 24:7 ^{<66A>}Revelation 16:20 18:20 20:11 [BENGE]. There is scarcely a prophecy of Messiah in the Old Testament which does not, to some extent at least, refer to His second coming [SIR ISAAC NEWTON]. ^{<88B>}Psalms 68:8 mentions the *heavens* dropping near the mountain (Sinai); but Haggai speaks of the whole created heavens: “Wait only *a little while*, though the promised event is not apparent yet; for soon will God change things for the better: do not stop short with these preludes and fix your eyes on the present state of the temple [CALVIN]. God shook the *heavens* by the lightnings at Sinai; the *earth*, that it should give forth waters; the *sea*, that it should be divided asunder. In Christ’s time God *shook the heaven*, when He spake from it; the *earth*, when it quaked; the *sea*, when He commanded the winds and waves [GROTIUS]. CICERO records at the time of Christ the silencing of the heathen oracles; and DIO, the fall of the idols in the Roman capitol.

7. *shake* — not *convert*; but cause that agitation which is to precede Messiah’s coming as the healer of the nations’ agitations. The previous shaking shall cause the yearning “*desire*” for the Prince of peace. MOORE and others translate “the beauty,” or “the desirable things (the precious gifts) of all nations shall come” (^{<20B>}Isaiah 60:5,11 61:6). He brings these objections to applying “the desire of all nations” to Messiah:

(1) The *Hebrew* means the *quality*, not the *thing* desired, namely, its *desirableness* or beauty, But the abstract is often put for the concrete. So “a man of desires,” that is, *one desired* or *desirable* (^{<20B>}Daniel 9:23 10:11, *Margin*; ^{<20B>}Daniel 10:3, *Margin*).

(2) Messiah was not desired by all nations, but “a root out of a dry ground,” having “no beauty that we should *desire* Him” (^{<25B>}Isaiah 53:2). But what is implied is not that the nations definitely desired *Him*, but that He was the only one to satisfy the yearning desires which all felt unconsciously for a Savior, shown in their painful rites and bloody sacrifices. Moreover, while the Jews as a nation desired Him not (to which people ^{<25B>}Isaiah 53:2 refers), the Gentiles, who are plainly pointed out by “all nations,” accepted Him; and so to them He was peculiarly desirable.

(3) The verb, “shall come,” is *plural*, which requires the noun to be understood in the *plural*, whereas if Messiah be intended, the noun is *singular*. But when two nouns stand together, of which one is governed

by the other, the verb agrees sometimes *in number* with the latter, though it really has the former as its nominative, that is, the *Hebrew* “come” is made *in number* to agree with “nations,” though really agreeing with “the desire.” Besides, Messiah may be described as realizing in Himself at His coming “*the desires* (the noun expressing collectively the *plural*) of all nations”; whence the verb is *plural*. So in ^{<216>}Song of Solomon 5:16, “He is altogether lovely,” in the *Hebrew* the same word as here, “all *desires*,” that is, altogether desirable, or the object of desires.

(4) Haggai 2:8, “The silver is mine,” etc. accords with the translation, “the choice things of all nations” shall be brought in. But Haggai 2:8 harmonizes quite as well with *English Version* of Haggai 2:7, as the note on eighth verse will show; see on Haggai 2:8.

(5) the *Septuagint* and *Syriac* versions agree with MOORE’S translation. But *Vulgate* confirms *English Version*. So also early Jewish Rabbis before JEROME’S time. PLATO [*Alcibiades*, 2] shows the yearning of the Gentiles after a spiritual deliverer: “It is therefore necessary,” says Alcibiades on the subject of acceptable worship, “to wait until One teach us how we ought to behave towards the gods and men.” Alcibiades replies, “When shall that time arrive, and who shall that Teacher be? For most glad would I be to see such a man.” The “good tidings of great joy” were “to all people” (^{<217>}Luke 2:10). The Jews, and those in the adjoining nations instructed by them, looked for *Shiloh to come unto whom the gathering of the people was to be*, from Jacob’s prophecy (^{<190>}Genesis 49:10). The early patriarchs, Job (^{<1825>}Job 19:25-27 33:23-26) and Abraham (^{<1826>}John 8:56), *desired Him*.

fill this house with glory — (Haggai 2:9). As the first temple was filled with the cloud of glory, the symbol of God (^{<1081>}1 Kings 8:11 ^{<164>}2 Chronicles 5:14), so this second temple was filled with the “glory” of God (^{<114>}John 1:14) *veiled* in the flesh (as it were in the cloud) at Christ’s first coming, when He entered it and performed miracles there (^{<212>}Matthew 21:12-14); but that “glory” is to be *revealed* at His second coming, as this prophecy in its ulterior reference foretells (Malachi 3:1). The Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem all expected Messiah would appear in the second temple. Since that time they invent various forced and false interpretations of such plain Messianic prophecies.

8. *The silver is mine* — (^{<1811>}Job 41:11 ^{<1812>}Psalm 50:12). Ye are disappointed at the absence of these precious metals in the adorning of this temple, as compared with the first temple: If I pleased I could adorn this temple with them, but I will adorn it with a “glory” (Haggai 2:7,9) far more

precious; namely, with the presence of My divine Son in His veiled glory first, and at His second coming with His revealed glory, accompanied with outward adornment of gold and silver, of which the golden covering within and without put on by Herod is the type. Then shall the nations bring offerings of those precious metals which ye now miss so much (^{<238B>}Isaiah 2:3 60:3,6,7 ^{<560B>}Ezekiel 43:2,4,5 44:4). The heavenly Jerusalem shall be similarly adorned, but shall need “no temple” (^{<6210>}Revelation 21:10-22). Compare ^{<482>}1 Corinthians 3:12, where *gold* and *silver* represent the most precious things (Zechariah 2:5). The inward glory of New Testament redemption far exceeds the outward glory of the Old Testament dispensation. So, in the case of the individual poor believer, God, if He pleased, could bestow gold and silver, but He bestows far better treasures, the possession of which might be endangered by that of the former (^{<308B>}James 2:5).

9. *The glory of this latter house ... greater than of the former* — namely, through the presence of Messiah, *in (whose) face is given the light of the knowledge of the glory of God* (^{<400B>}2 Corinthians 4:6; compare ^{<300B>}Hebrews 1:2), and who said of Himself, “in this place is one greater than the temple” (^{<412B>}Matthew 12:6), and who “sat daily teaching in it” (^{<415B>}Matthew 26:55). Though Zerubbabel’s temple was taken down to the foundations when Herod rebuilt the temple, the latter was considered, in a religious point of view, as not a *third* temple, but virtually the second temple.

in this place ... peace — namely, at Jerusalem, the metropolis of the kingdom of God, whose seat was the temple: where Messiah “made peace through the blood of His cross” (^{<5011>}Colossians 1:20). Thus the “glory” consists in this “peace.” This peace begins by the removal of the difficulty in the way of the just God accepting the guilty (^{<498B>}Psalms 85:8,10 ^{<230B>}Isaiah 9:6,7 53:5 ^{<306B>}Zechariah 6:13 ^{<405B>}2 Corinthians 5:18,19); then it creates peace in the sinner’s own heart (^{<257B>}Isaiah 57:19 ^{<410B>}Acts 10:36 ^{<400B>}Romans 5:1 14:17 ^{<402B>}Ephesians 2:13-17 ^{<500B>}Philippians 4:7); then peace in the whole earth (^{<316B>}Micah 5:5 ^{<414B>}Luke 2:14). First peace between God and man, then between man and God, then between man and man (^{<2104B>}Isaiah 2:4 ^{<302B>}Hosea 2:18 ^{<300B>}Zechariah 9:10). As “Shiloh” (^{<4090>}Genesis 49:10) means *peace*, this verse confirms the view that Haggai 2:7, “the desire of all nations,” refers to Shiloh or Messiah, foretold in ^{<4090>}Genesis 49:10.

^{<3020>}Haggai 2:10-19.

THIRD PROPHECY.

Sacrifices without obedience (in respect to God's command to build the temple) could not sanctify. Now that they are obedient, God will bless them, though no sign is seen of fertility as yet.

10. *four and twentieth day ... ninth month* — three days more than two months from the second prophecy (Haggai 2:1); in the month Chisleu, the lunar one about the time of our December. The Jews seem to have made considerable progress in the work in the interval (^{<3025>}Haggai 2:15-18).

11. *Ask ... the priests* — Propose this question to them on the law. The priests were the authorized expounders of the law (^{<3001>}Leviticus 10:11 ^{<3590>}Deuteronomy 33:10 ^{<3423>}Ezekiel 44:23 Malachi 2:7).

12. “Holy flesh” (that is, the flesh of a sacrifice, ^{<2415>}Jeremiah 11:15), indeed, makes holy the “skirt” in which it is carried; but that “skirt” cannot impart its sanctity to any thing beyond, as “bread,” etc. (^{<0132>}Leviticus 6:27). This is cited to illustrate the principle, that a sacrifice, holy, as enveloping divine things (just as the “skirt” is “holy” which envelops “holy” flesh), cannot by its inherent or *opus operatum* efficacy make holy a person whose disobedience, as that of the Jew while neglecting God's house, made him unholy.

13. On the other hand, a legally “unclean” person imparts his uncleanness to any thing, whereas a legally holy thing cannot confer its sanctity on an “unclean” person (^{<0119>}Numbers 19:11,13,22). Legal sanctity is not so readily communicated as legal impurity. So the paths to sin are manifold: the paths to holiness one, and that one of difficult access [GROTIUS]. One drop of filth will defile a vase of water: many drops of water will not purify a vase of filth [MOORE].

14. *Then answered Haggai* — rather, “Then Haggai answered (in rejoinder to the priests' answer) and said” [MAURER].

so is this people — heretofore not in such an obedient state of mind as to deserve to be called *My people* (^{<3015>}Titus 1:15). Here he applies the two cases just stated. By the first case, “this people” is not made “holy” by their offerings “there” (namely, on the altar built in the open air, under Cyrus, ^{<3133>}Ezra 3:3); though the ritual sacrifice can ordinarily sanctify outwardly so far as it reaches (^{<3013>}Hebrews 9:13), as the “holy flesh” sanctified the “skirt,” yet it cannot make the offerers in their persons and all their works acceptable to God, because lacking the spirit of obedience (^{<0152>}1 Samuel 15:22) so long as they neglected to build the Lord's house. On the contrary, by the second case, they made “unclean” their very *offerings* by being

unclean through “dead works” (disobedience), just as the person unclean by contact with a dead body imparted his uncleanness to all that he touched (compare ^{<3094}Hebrews 9:14). This all applies to them as they had been, not as they are now that they have begun to obey; the design is to guard them against falling back again. The “there” points to the altar, probably in view of the audience which the prophet addressed.

15. *consider* — literally, “lay it to heart.” Ponder earnestly, retracing the past “upward” (that is, backward), comparing what evils heretofore befell you before ye set about this work, with the present time when you have again commenced it, and when in consequence I now engage to “bless you.” Hence ye may perceive the evils of disobedience and the blessing of obedience.

16. *Since those days were* — from the time that those days of your neglect of the temple work have been.

when one came to an heap of twenty measures — that is to a heap *which he had expected would be one* of twenty measures, there were but ten.

fifty vessels out of the press — As the *Septuagint* translates “measure,” and *Vulgate* “a flagon,” and as we should rather expect *vat* than *press*. MAURER translates (omitting *vessels*, which is not in the original), “*purahs*,” or “wine-measures.”

17. Appropriated from ^{<3099}Amos 4:9, whose canonicity is thus sealed by Haggai’s inspired authority; in the last clause, “*turned*,” however, has to be supplied, its omission marking by the elliptical abruptness (“yet ye not to Me!”) God’s displeasure. Compare “(*let him come*) unto Me!” Moses in excitement omitting the bracketed words (^{<3026}Exodus 32:26). “Blasting” results from excessive drought; “mildew, from excessive moisture.

18. Resumed from ^{<3025}Haggai 2:15 after ^{<3026}Haggai 2:16,17, that the blessing in ^{<3029}Haggai 2:19 may stand in the more marked contrast with the curse in ^{<3026}Haggai 2:16,17. Affliction will harden the heart, if not referred to God as its author [MOORE].

even from the day that the foundation of ... temple was laid — The first foundation beneath the earth had been long ago laid in the second year of Cyrus, 535 B.C. (^{<3180}Ezra 3:10,11); the foundation now laid was the secondary one, which, above the earth, was laid on the previous work [TIRINUS]. Or, translate, “From this day on which the temple is being begun,” namely, on the foundations long ago laid [GROTIUS]. MAURER translates, “Consider ... from the four and twentieth day ... *to* (the time

which has elapsed) from the day on which the foundation ... was laid.” The *Hebrew* supports *English Version*.

19. *Is the seed yet in the barn?* — implying, It is *not*. It has been already sown this month, and there are no more signs of its bearing a good crop, much less of its being safely stored *in the barn*, than there were in the past season, when there was such a failure; yet I promise to you *from this day* (emphatically marking by the repetition the connection of the blessing with *the day* of their obedience) a *blessing* in an abundant harvest. So also the vine, etc., which heretofore have borne little or nothing, shall be *blessed* with productiveness. Thus it will be made evident that the blessing is due to Me, not to nature. We may trust God’s promise to bless us, though we see no visible sign of its fulfillment (Habakkuk 2:3).

^{<37121>}Haggai 2:20-23.

FOURTH PROPHECY.

God’s promise through Zerubbabel to Israel of safety in the coming commotions.

20. *the month* — the ninth in the second year of Darius. The same date as Prophecy III (^{<37021>}Haggai 2:10).

21. *to Zerubbabel* — Perhaps Zerubbabel had asked as to the convulsions foretold (Haggai 2:6,7). This is the reply: The Jews had been led to fear that these convulsions would destroy their national existence. *Zerubbabel*, therefore, as their civil leader and representative is addressed, not Joshua, their religious leader. Messiah is the antitypical Zerubbabel, their national Representative and King, with whom God the Father makes the covenant wherein they, as identified with Him, are assured of safety in God’s electing love (compare ^{<37023>}Haggai 2:23, “will make thee as a signet”; “I have chosen thee”).

shake ... heavens — (see on Haggai 2:6,7); violent political convulsions accompanied with physical prodigies (^{<4107>}Matthew 24:7,29).

22. All other world kingdoms are to be overthrown to make way for Christ’s universal kingdom (^{<27044>}Daniel 2:44). War chariots are to give place to His reign of peace (^{<37510>}Micah 5:10 ^{<38007>}Zechariah 9:10).

23. *take thee* — under My protection and to promote thee and thy people to honor (^{<37870>}Psalms 78:70).

a signet — (So 8:6 ^{<4224>}Jeremiah 22:24). A ring with a seal on it; the legal representative of the owner; generally of precious stones and gold, etc., and

much valued. Being worn on the finger, it was an object of constant regard. In all which points of view the theocratic people, and their representative, Zerubbabel the type, and Messiah his descendant the Antitype, are regarded by God. The safety of Israel to the end is guaranteed in Messiah, in whom God hath chosen them as His own (^{<2301>}Isaiah 42:1 43:10 44:1 49:3). So the spiritual Israel is sealed in their covenant head by His Spirit (^{<4012>}Corinthians 1:20,22 ^{<4004>}Ephesians 1:4,13,14). All is ascribed, not to the merits of Zerubbabel, but to God's gratuitous *choice*. Christ is the "signet" on God's hand: always in the Father's presence, ever pleasing in his sight. The signet of an Eastern monarch was the sign of *delegated authority*; so Christ (^{<4188>}Matthew 28:18 ^{<4162>}John 5:22,23).