

## Commentary on Haggai Chapters 1 and 2, by Chuck Smith 7.17.24

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### **May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)**

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

### **June memory verse Romans 6:9 (NKJV)**

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.

Death no longer has dominion over Him.

### **July memory verse Romans 6:10 (NKJV)**

For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

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### Chapter 1

Now we come to Haggai who prophesied in the second year of Darius the king. This is not the Darius of Daniel's fame who was the Persian general when Babylon fell, but this is a Darius who came along later in the year 520 B.C., and that's about the time of Haggai's prophecy. They feel that his prophecy covered a period of two months. Isn't that interesting how that in two month's time the fellow fulfilled God's call upon his life? Esther fulfilled the call of God upon her life in two day's time. Remember her uncle Mordecai said, "How do you know but what God has not brought you to the kingdom for such an hour as this? This is your moment, Esther. This is why you've been born. This is your purpose for life." And it was all accomplished so quickly. Here's Haggai a prophet, prophesying for a period of a couple of months.

Now as we get into Haggai, and Zechariah, and Malachi, shift gears. Historically, now we were just in Zephaniah and that was just before the fall, to Babylon. He was predicting the judgment that God would bring upon them through Babylon and all. Then during the time that they were in the Babylonian captivity, Daniel and Ezekiel were prophesying to them. Now the Babylonian captivity is over.

Now a remnant have gone back to Jerusalem, and have started building the temple under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua. But they are hassled by the Samaritans, the people who had inhabited the land during the seventy years that they were in captivity. The Samaritans first came and offered to help them. They said, "You're a bunch of mongrels. We don't want your help. We're able to do it ourselves." So then they began to send letters to the king of Persia, and they said, "You better check out these dudes. They're rebellious, their whole history is that of rebellion. If they rebuild the city, they're already talking about rebelling against you once they get the

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walls up. You better stop their building." So the king of Persia ordered a cease and desist order. "Stop the building." Then through other communications they said, "Look, we have the permission of Cyrus. We've got the papers that have given us the permission to build. Check the records." They checked it out. So the orders came to start building again. But by this time the people had become interested in building their own homes. They were beginning to settle down in their own places, fixing up, and making their places luxurious. They had lost interest in the rebuilding of the temple.

So Haggai comes along and he is encouraging the people to get back to work in the rebuilding of the temple. His prophecies have to do with the encouragement of rebuilding the temple.

So in your books of history in the Old Testament, this prophecy of Haggai takes place during the period of Ezra and Nehemiah. Now if you want extra credit for the course, go back and read Ezra and Nehemiah in conjunction with the last three books, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. If you read it with Ezra and Nehemiah, you will then fit it with its historic position.

So in the second year of Darius [520 B.C.], in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, [the second year of the reign of Darius the king,] there came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel [who was one of the leaders in this movement of rebuilding] the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house shall be built ([Hag 1:1-2](#)).

Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

They were saying, "The time isn't come," and he said,

Is it time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD; Consider your ways ([Hag 1:3-5](#)).

Now it is interesting how that Haggai, or the Lord through Haggai is constantly calling the people to consider. You know, there are a lot of things that happen around us and we never take it into consideration. It seems that we've become very shallow people. Through our television news and through our news magazines and through all of the media that we have today, we've become extremely broad people. We know a little bit about everything because of all of the glorious media that we now have, able to condense things down and give us a little synopsis of this, and a little synopsis of that. So we've become extremely broad. We know a little bit about everything. But we don't know much about anything. We're very shallow. We don't really stop to consider a lot of times things that are happening around us. The Lord is saying, "Hey, look. Take a look at this. Consider this now. Consider this now." So Haggai is calling the people to consider their ways. For he said,

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[Look,] you have sown a lot of seed, but you've harvested very little; you don't have enough; you drink, but you're not filled; you are busy making your clothes, but you are not warm; and he that earns wages earns wages to put it into a bag with holes ([Hag 1:6](#)).

Very descriptive, isn't it? Remind you of anything you've experienced? You put your wages in a purse that has holes. Where does the money go?

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways ([Hag 1:7](#)).

The second challenge to consider, "Consider this, times are bad, your crops are failing, you don't have enough, there's not enough to go around." Now he said,

Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD. For you looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of my house that is waste, and ye have run every man to his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground brings forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon the labor of their hands ([Hag 1:8-11](#)).

The Lord said, "I've brought the drought because you have forsaken My house; you've allowed my house to lie waste because you are putting yourselves first."

Now Jesus said that the heathen world, the Gentile world is seeking after what it's gonna eat, what it's gonna drink, and what it's gonna wear. These are basically the things that the Lord is talking to these people about. So many people today are working double jobs. They're both, husbands and wives working because they're so concerned with what they're gonna eat, what they're gonna drink, and what they're gonna wear. Times are tough. There's not enough money to go around. There seems to be a drought. But the Lord said, "The reason why is because you have forsaken My house. You've allowed it to be desolate." So the Lord, he said, called for the drought.

Now in the New Testament where Jesus said, "These things do the Gentiles seek," He said, "but you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be taken care of" ([Matthew 6:33](#)). You see, the people had messed up their priorities. They were seeking themselves first. They were seeking their own luxuries first, and as a result, they didn't have enough. They were seeking to provide for their physical needs: their clothing, their food, their drink, and they never had enough. They never had enough. The Lord said, "Look, you seek first My kingdom and My righteousness, and all these other things will be added." Get your priorities straight. Put the Lord first in your life. Seek the Lord first in your life, and God will take care of your needs.

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Now our sinful hearts of unbelief said, "But I don't know how He can do it." But it isn't yours to know how; it's only yours to obey in faith. If you obey in faith and put God first and seek God first, you can be sure that His Word is true, and all these other things will be added to you. God will take care of you. God will provide for you if you put Him first. But you know one of the first things to get whacked out of a budget is the Lord's place. One of the first things to go. "Oh, I've got to work on Sunday, gonna miss church, but I'll listen. I'll get the tapes, and I'll catch up on the Sunday lesson." We're putting our own needs above the things of God. God is getting short-changed. But hey, that's a one-way street. The more I short-change God, the shorter my change becomes. God said, "Look, I've called for the drought."

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD ([Hag 1:12](#)).

So they responded to this exhortation of Haggai. They considered, and they responded. So Haggai came with a second message.

Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD ([Hag 1:13](#)).

Now that was a very short message, but oh, what a comforting message. They obeyed and the Lord spoke again and said, "I am with you, saith the Lord." That was all the message.

So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of their God. And in the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king ([Hag 1:14-15](#)).

### Chapter 2

Now in the seventh month, in the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Haggai, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, to Joshua, and to the residue of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how does it look to you now? is it not in your eyes in comparison as of nothing ([Hag 2:1-3](#))?

The temple of Solomon, of course, was an extremely glorious building. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's troops.

Now in the book of Ezra we're told that as they began to lay the foundation for the new temple at this time, the young people, those who had been born in Babylonian captivity, those who had never seen the glory of Jerusalem during the days prior to the captivity,

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those that had never seen the glorious temple that Solomon had built. Those young people were all rejoicing. They were dancing. They were happy. "We're laying the foundations of the Lord's temple!" But the older people who remembered the glory of Solomon's temple, when they saw how paltry was this new thing that they're building, they, "stood there and wept."

So upon this occasion, the older people who could still remember the glorious Solomon's temple, on the occasion of their weeping, the word of the Lord came through Haggai, "And who of you is left among those that saw this house in her first glory? And how do you see it now? Is it just really as nothing compared to the first?"

Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, and be strong, ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts ([Hag 2:4](#)):

So for those who were prone to be discouraged because it seemed to be nothing in comparison with the past, the Lord encourages them to be strong to continue, and again the promise, "For I am with you."

And according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remains among you: fear ye not. 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; 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 ([Hag 2:5-7](#)).

Now this, no doubt, is a prophecy to the Great Tribulation period when God is gonna shake the world once again. Actually, in the book of Hebrews, twelfth chapter, we read, "For the Lord said, 'And once again I am going to shake the world like it has never been shaken before. So that everything that can be shaken will be brought down, and only that which cannot be shaken shall remain.'" Tell you what; I don't want to be in downtown L.A. when that takes place. Once again God said, "I'm gonna shake the world until everything that can be shaken will be destroyed."

What folly it is for us to put all of our energies and efforts and all into the material things, because they can all be shaken.

How we need to be putting our time, our energies, our efforts into spiritual things, for they can't be shaken. When everything else is shaken and destroyed, that will still last. You have only one life; it will soon be passed. And only what you do for Jesus Christ is going to last. Everything else that you've built for yourself, your whole estate or whatever, is wood, hay and stubble; it's all gonna burn. Only what you have laid up in spiritual store is gonna be lasting. That ought to speak to every one of us tonight, to again consider. God is saying, "Consider, consider, consider your priorities." What is first in your life? What is taking the prime place in your mind and in your life?

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After the shaking of the world, after the destruction of this present material world as it is, then the Desire of nations will come. The glorious coming again of Jesus Christ, and then the glory of God once again filling the temple.

The temple, of course, is described in the book of Ezekiel.

The silver is mine, the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. 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 ([Hag 2:8-9](#)).

So this marvelous prophecy of Haggai when the Lord returns, the Desire of nations and the glory of God fills the temple. It is in that place that the Lord will give peace.

Now in the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, [so now we are two months after the first prophecy] in the second year of Darius, [same second year of Darius] came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one is bearing holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt he does touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No ([Hag 2:10-12](#)).

Now, there were all kinds of laws that God gave in Leviticus concerning holy and unholy things. So there were many ways by which you could defile yourself. Then anything you touched would become defiled. If you would touch a dead body, then you would be considered unholy. And, if you touched anything else, then that would also be considered unholy. So he's asking, "The priest is bearing this holy flesh, and with his skirt he touches something that is common, is the holy flesh then still considered holy?" The answer then is no.

It is interesting how that the priest and the scribes and Pharisees in the days of Jesus, when they would go down the street, would wrap their coats tightly around them. Because they didn't want their coats flaring out and touching some unclean person. So they were very careful not to let their robes flare around. They might accidentally hit one of you unclean persons and they would be defiled. This is that kind of holiness that Jesus, of course, spoke so much against, this hypocritical kind of a thing. "I'm holier than thou. Don't touch me because I'm too holy to be touched, or be in touch with people." They, of course, found fault with Jesus because He ate with the common people. He ate with the sinners and the publicans. He would partake of the same soup with them, or the same bread. They found fault with Him for that.

Now the second question:

If one that is unclean by a dead body, [that is, if he has touched a dead body, and is thus ceremonially unclean] and if he touches any of these things, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, Yes, it would be unclean, if he would touch anything being in an unclean state. Then answered Haggai, So is this people, and so is this

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nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean ([Hag 2:13-14](#)).

So this law of that which is unclean by touching unclean things, there was this mixture. Trying to mix the spiritual with the material, and the Lord said, "Hey, it's all unclean."

And now I pray you, consider [and again, the calling for the consideration] from this day onward, from before the stone was laid upon the stone in the temple of the LORD: Since those days were, when one came to a heap of twenty measures, and there were but ten: one came to the pressvat to draw fifty vessels out of the press, but there were only twenty ([Hag 2:15-16](#)).

In other words, "From these days that you had your shortages, these days when there wasn't enough to go around, the days before you started this building again of the temple. Now mark this, and consider this."

When I smote you with the blasting and the mildew and the hail of all of the labors of your hands; yet you did not turn to me, saith the LORD. But consider now from this day onward, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the LORD'S temple was laid, consider now this. Is the seed yet in the barn? yes, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day [the Lord said] I will bless you ([Hag 2:17-19](#)).

So He's saying now, "Look, you've been going through some rough times financially. You haven't had enough to go around. You've been going through hard times, but it's because your priorities were wrong. You were putting your needs and yourself first. Put Me first, and I'll take care of your needs."

Now as they began to build the temple again, and began to give themselves in the labor in the temple, the prophet came and said, "Now look, mark this day. Things are gonna change. From here on out you're going to have plenty. Now you've got your priorities straight. Now you've put God in the place where He should be, first in your life. Having put God first, God will now take care of you, and God will now provide for you."

Such is a universal truth and a universal law that knows no time, that knows no dispensation. Put God first in your life, and God will take care of the rest of the things of your life. Put the things of your life first, and you're always gonna be running short. You'll never have enough. It is a fallacy of spiritual logic to say, "We will start tithing when we have enough money to do so." It's like the fellow says, "I'm gonna get married just as soon as I have enough money to do so." He's still a bachelor; he'll never have enough. You've got to step out in faith.

Now once again the word of the Lord came to Haggai, the fifth time, the final time.

In the twenty fourth day of the month the same day ([Hag 2:20](#)),

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So in two months all of Haggai's prophecies. I find that very fascinating. I've been at it for years and years and years.

Speak to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth ([Hag 2:21](#));

This, again, is a reference to the Great Tribulation period.

I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, I will destroy the strength of 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. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and I will make thee as a sign: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts ([Hag 2:22-23](#)).

Now in the book of Revelation, chapter 11, John speaks of the two witnesses that God is going to send. One of the two witnesses we know to be Elijah from the last word of the Old Testament, the book of Malachi, where the Lord said, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." So Elijah preceding the Lord; one of the two witnesses.

There has been an awful lot of speculation as to the identity of the second witness. Some have said Enoch. Because he did not die but was translated into heaven, and Elijah did not die, so these two men come to meet their appointment with death. Others say Moses, because Moses represented the law, and Elijah represented the prophets. Those spokesmen for God to the people, or to the Jewish nation, always the law and the prophets speak to the Jews.

I've never shared with anybody my beliefs on this. I've always given the options that have been spoken of by the various Bible teachers. But I personally feel that Zerubbabel will be the other witness. Because the Lord here declares that when He comes to overthrow the throne and the kingdoms, to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen, that, "I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, My servant, and I will make thee as a sign. For I have chosen thee saith the Lord of hosts."

Now, not to just dump that on you without anything else. In chapter 4 of the book of Zechariah ([Zec 4](#)), which we will be getting next week. Let me give you just a little insight into next week's.

And the angel that talked with me came again, and he waked me as a man that is awakened out of his sleep. And he said unto me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I've looked, and behold, there's a candlestick of all gold, with a bowl up on the top of it, and seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes are leading to the seven lamps which are on the top of it. And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl, and the



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other on the left side." So I answered, and I spake to the angel that talked with me saying, "What are these my lord?" And the angel that talked with me answered, and said unto me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." Then he answered and said unto me, "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit saith the Lord of hosts.'" Who are thou, O great mountain before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and shall bring forth a headstone thereof with shoutings crying, "Grace, grace unto it" ([Zechariah 4:1-7](#)).

So here is Zerubbabel, the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel signified in these two olive trees with the pipes that lead into the candlesticks.

Now in the book of Revelation, chapter 11, where we read of these two witnesses, beginning with verse 3([Rev 11:3](#)), "And I will give power unto My two witnesses and they shall prophesy 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." We are told that the candlestick was actually the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, "Not by might, nor by power," and so here that prophecy, or that of Zerubbabel is referred to in Revelation in context with the two witnesses. Something to think about. Doesn't really make any difference, but it's interesting with all of the speculation. Throw that into the hopper too.

Shall we pray.

Father, how our hearts yearn for the return of Jesus Christ. How the world so desperately needs the touch of His love, the experiencing of His grace, and His saving power. Lord, we see the earth being shaken now, the kingdoms being shaken. We see the turmoil, the distress, the perplexities. O Lord, how we need for Your kingdom to come and Your will to be done here on this earth. Lord, man in exercising his own will, following his own passions and greed has almost destroyed this beautiful planet that You have created. We've raped its resources. We've polluted its atmosphere and waters. O God, how we plundered and ravaged Thy beautiful world. Oh God, how desperately we need Your help. How desperately the world needs Your help tonight. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, establish Your kingdom. Bring peace and righteousness, lest man destroy himself. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.