

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

HAGGAI

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INTRODUCTION:

The three books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther cover about 100 yrs. (538-432 B.C.). They tell the story of the Jews return from Babylon, of the rebuilding of the Temple and Jerusalem, and of the reestablishment of the Jews national life in their homeland. The last three of the Old Testament prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi lived and worked during this same period of return and restoration. With the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C., the people of God entered a new phase of their history. The period from 586 to 538 B.C. is called the Exile period or the Babylonian captivity. By exile it means that a large number of Israelites and Judeans now were living outside of the Promised Land, in foreign countries.

The book of Haggai was written by the prophet Haggai to the people in Jerusalem and those who had returned from exile. Judah had been conquered, Jerusalem burned, the temple demolished, and the people carried away to Babylon (605-586 B.C. as told in 2nd Kings 24-25). After 70 years of captivity, about 50,000 Jews had returned to their own land, by decree of King Cyrus (538 B.C.), and had begun to rebuild the temple. But soon after they laid the foundation, the work was stopped by their enemy neighbors. Haggai was the first prophet to Israel following the return from the Babylonian captivity. Haggai and Zechariah were used to prophesy to the people about the same time in rebuilding the Temple.

1:1 In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying,— Going back to Ezra 3 in the seventh month of the first year of the people's return, the Israelites built an altar, offered burnt offerings, and kept the Feast of Tabernacles. Ezra was the priest of that time. When Nehemiah went to Jerusalem, Ezra had been there for 14 years, but Ezra was a priest teaching religion to the people. Nehemiah came as civil governor, with authority from Cyrus, king of Persia to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem which would make the city fortified again. Nehemiah had opposition. However, under Nehemiah the walls were rebuilt and dedicated. Now in this verse, in the second year Darius was king in the sixth month, and Haggai was the prophet sent by God to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah (political leader), and Joshua was the high priest (religious leader). And at this particular time after the Jews had returned, the temple still lay unfinished. It had laid waste for over 15 years when the word of the Lord came by Haggai.

1:2 Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. The Lord of hosts addresses His people as **this people** because they were disobedient and unconcerned. They now give the excuse that it's not time to build. Mind you, King Cyrus had freed them from exile to build the Temple; he had also generously given the money to enable them to do it. It was already

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prophesized in Isaiah 45:1-13. By stopping the work, the Jews were admitting that they had no faith in God's Word or in His power to perform it. They had laid the foundation before hostile opposition from neighbors came and caused discouragement. They presumptuously claimed to know better than God, so they left the Temple in waste and let it lie unfinished.

1:3 Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying,— To the leaders of these unconcerned people the Lord sends Haggai with his first of four messages. The first message was to Zerruabbel and Joshua (Hag.1:1); the second message was to Zerruabbel, Joshua and the residue of people (Hag.2:1-2); the third message was to the priests (Hag.2:10), and the fourth message was to Zerubbabel (Hag.2:20). Each time they were addressed with a question except the fourth time.

1:4 Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?— The people had not passed the time in absolute idleness, for they had taken time to build for themselves luxurious ceiled houses; houses that were paneled not only on the walls, but also on the ceilings with fine wood. In contrast the Lord's house lay in waste (discarded). Since the people had said that it wasn't time to build the Lord's house (v.2), the question is directed in a challenge to them: "*Is it time for you to dwell in **your** ceiled houses and the Lord's house lie in waste?*" The problem was not that the people had built such fine houses for themselves, but rather they had done so to the neglect of the house of the Lord. They had gotten their priorities out of order. They had put their own self-interests above the Lord's.

1:5 Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways.— Haggai's first message revealed the low spiritual conditions of the day. The Lord of hosts through the prophet Haggai says, "*Consider your ways.*" That meant for them to give sincere thought to; be careful what you say next. It's a plea on the part of God for the leaders of the people to take note of what they are doing at this time, compare it to what they should be doing, and mend their ways accordingly. This command is issued five times throughout the course of this prophesy (v.5, 7; 2:15, 18 (twice)). They had been diverting all their attention to themselves, and have been diverting all their wealth to their own pleasure, especially the acquiring of fine houses, but none to the house of God!

1:6 Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.— The people had sown bountiful crops, but they had reaped sparingly; they ate food, but didn't have enough; they drank, but were never satisfied; they had clothing, but it was never adequate; they earned money, but could never get ahead. They suffered from inflation (their money did not buy as much as it had done); bad crops; bad weather; God was angry with them. They were so content about achieving their own ends that they completely forgot about God. All they did was futile. It was like holes in a bag draining out because they left God out. They didn't realize their blessings were from God; not even their fine homes they had built. They sowed much, able to eat, drink, clothed themselves, and earned wages, but didn't find time for God's service. The more they got, the more they lost. The blessings never seemed like it was enough. Their disobedience of not building the Temple outweigh any blessings.

1:7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. He reiterates again, "*Consider your ways.*"¹ In all of life there is a time to talk and a time to act; a time to consider and a time to stop talking and start doing. This

¹ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1997-05-18-Does-Your-Bag-Have-Holes/>

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was a time to act because they had not honored God. Every area of life was suffering. The only remedy was to stop making excuses, repent, and then start doing what God had told them to do 15 years earlier.

1:8 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. Haggai urges them with three imperatives: 1) go up to the mountain, 2) bring wood and 3) resume building the house of the Lord. Hills around Jerusalem may have been covered with ample woods. They were to use the wood to rebuild the house of the Lord and therein these imperatives would cause a chain reaction from God. He would take pleasure in it and He would be glorified. By putting God first, God would then be honored in their worship and they would be blessed in the secondary matters of life.

1:9 Ye looked for much, and, lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Even when in ruins, the temple was still called the *"house of God."* Showing them how misplaced priorities work. In verse 6 *"they had sown much, but brought in little."* This verse *"they looked for much and it came to little."* Haggai tells them the reason they have little is because God blew on it when they brought it into their homes. He *"blew on it"* signifying His rejection, and it quickly disappeared; dissipated rapidly like chaff, again because the people had neglected the Temple's rebuilding work. They put their wealth in their own homes, and they didn't consider God's house. God's words revealed that when they looked for much from Him, but they got little when they brought it home to store. When God talks about a storehouse, His house was to be the storehouse for them to run to, but it laid in waste, while their houses, where they brought their goods to, became the storehouses that they ran back to.

1:10 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. Because the Jews returned to the land in obedience to the Lord, they thought He would give them special blessings because of their sacrifices, but they were disappointed. To get their attention, He had to speak bluntly so the rebellious people could understand. This is where God stopped the heavens from giving dew, and stopped the earth from producing fruit.

1:11 And 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 bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands. The Lord called for a drought and withheld both the dew and rain. It affected the crops of corn, vineyards, cattle, and all that man and cattle could produce. He took away His blessing from the men who labored in the fields, vineyards, and orchards.

1:12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Hosedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the Lord. ²It took drastic measures, but they finally agreed that they had neglected the work of the Lord. One good thing can be said about the leader and the people: they had enough sense to listen to the messenger of God! On many occasions people have waited before they committed to following God again. Zerubbabel led the way, Joshua followed with him, and the people as well, followed. Haggai had convinced them, that God would not bless them, until they began building the Temple. They accepted Haggai's words as being the Words of the Lord,

² <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/haggai/01.html>
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and they agreed to work on the temple. The fear of the LORD caused the people to do what Haggai said they must do, if they were to be blessed.

1:13-15 In response to this obedience, the Lord sends a message of assurance to His people through the prophet. He says "**I Am With You.**" ³Once they had committed to the work, the Spirit of the LORD filled (was stirred) in them all (Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the remnant of people). The Spirit was a confirmation that the LORD was pleased with their decision. The Spirit gave them the strength to do the work. They were back in the game; they were back on track building the house of the Lord of hosts their God. So, the work began the sixth month in the second year of Darius; just 23 days after Haggai's first message. This was a quick response and really rare after a prophet's message. The people put their words into action. That's what we all should be doing when we hear a good sermon or read the Word of God: put it into action as the Lord leads.

SUMMARY:

The Jews had returned from Babylon in 538 B.C. to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem but were not able to finish because they were hindered by their enemies. Opposition put a halt to the progress of the Temple, and no further work had been done for 15 years. The prophet Haggai delivers a message from the Lord, to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah and Joshua, the high priest at the time. Zerubbabel was the political leader and Joshua was the religious leader. The people had said this was not the time to build the Lord's house (temple). The Lord sends the question through Haggai to them *"Is it time for you to live in luxurious homes, when the Temple lies in ruins?" (1:1-4).*

The Lord wanted the people to consider their ways; look at the results: planted, harvested little; not enough to eat or drink; not enough clothes to keep warm; their income disappears. Again Haggai says consider your ways; think it over. There has not been enough no matter what they had done. The harder the people worked for themselves, the less they had, because of their selfishness. Their priorities were messed up (1:5-7).

The only way the Lord would be pleased and glorified would be if they went to the mountain, brought the wood and started to build. He went back and explained it again. Their problem was that they hoped for much and got little. And the little they brought home, the Lord blew on it and it disappeared like chaff. Their concerns were their fine homes; their unconcern was the Temple that was laid in ruins. That's why the Lord really held back the heaven from giving the dew and the earth from yielding fruit. A drought came upon the land, the mountains, the corn, the vineyards, the olives, the cattle, and all that man and cattle could produce to get their attention. Once again nature and animals suffer because of man's sin. Zerubbabel, the governor; Joshua, the high priest; and the remnant or people in the land obeyed. They were firmly committed to build the temple. They began in just 23 days after Haggai first message. The first message came in the sixth month (1:8-12).

APPLICATION:

If we quit putting off for tomorrow and be sensitive to the Spirit of God, and obey Him, it wouldn't be as hard as we think it is, because God's Spirit knows how to lead us better than we do ourselves.

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³ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/haggai/01.html>
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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. Now it is the next month (the seventh month), the Lord speaks to the prophet Haggai again. In Leviticus 23:34 the Lord spoke to Moses declaring the fifteen day of the seventh month would be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days; after the seven days, the eighth day would begin the holy convocation (Lev.23:26). The whole period would be a time of Sabbath. This was an important month as God comes to Haggai again.

2:2 Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Sheatiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people saying,— This is Haggai's second message to Zerubbabel, the governor, Joshua the high priest, and those left in the land.

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 Temple was not always in this condition. So the Lord asks them a question: "*Who in the midst can remember the temple as it was before?*" As they saw it now, it was not the same. He is making a comparison between the past temple of Solomon and the present Temple. ⁴The magnificent Temple in Solomon's time was far above anything else in the world at that time. The wealth of silver and gold in the temple was like the wealth of an entire country today. The wood used was the cedar of Lebanon. These people, who had been in captivity, could not amass such great wealth. By the second year of Darius reign, 70 years had passed since Solomon's Temple was destroyed. Ezra (Ez.3:8-13) confirms that at the laying of the foundation of the Temple, many of the priests, Levites, and chief men that had seen Solomon's Temple wept. Some that were very old had lived during that time. They were saddened by the fact they could not rebuild the wonderful temple that Solomon had built. Zerubbabel's Temple lacked five glories which were present in Solomon's Temple: **1)** the Ark of the Covenant; **2)** the Holy Fire; **3)** the Shekinah Glory; **4)** the Spirit of Prophecy (The Holy Spirit); and **5)** the Urim and Thummim. No wonder the older men wept! How gracious of God to recognize their deep concern and grief.

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: — Though the difference between the two temples is evident and admitted, there is not cause for despair, nor excuse for not going on with the work. If anything, this was to encourage them to rely even more heavily on Jehovah, their God. ⁵God is not worried about the expensive items of the temple. God is more interested in their hearts desiring to build the temple. God is pleased with their effort. God is with them, and will help them. He says "*be strong O Zerubbabel; be strong O Joshua,* and He didn't leave out the people—" *be strong all ye people of the land.*" They had shown faith in God by starting the construction. All

⁴ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/haggai/02.html>

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He asks is their loyalty, and their love. He does not need, or want, wealth. Everything on, and in, the earth belongs to Him already. God's approval gives them strength to go on. Jehovah gives them a threefold encouragement: 1) His Personal Presence (2:4). This means that Jehovah's presence must be present!

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. God reminds them; brings back to their remembrance of the Covenant He had given them at Mount Sinai after they had come out of Egypt. They seem to have forgotten what God had done for them at the Red Sea. God had faithfully kept His Covenant with Israel! His past performance is a guarantee of His future performance. He assures them to not be fearful because His Spirit will remain with them. He gives 2) His Personal Commitment—to keep His promise to them (2:5). The Lord's Spirit represents mercy. When there is no one else, God will remain! Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon were all gone, but God's Spirit remains and therefore, fear will not comfort nor keep, them, but God will! It's good to revisit your past, but not stay there. God has so much more for our future!

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. The words, "...yet once" meant He had already shook the earth when He gave Moses the Law and "*it is a little while*" means at another time there will be a greater shaking than the earthquake. There will come a tremendous shaking that the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the dry land will go through. This may be just before Jesus sets up His kingdom, according to Matthew 24:29 "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:*" Also, Hebrews 12:26. This was a bigger picture the people had not seen but were told of. There would be 1) the coming Great Tribulation and 2) the future renovation of the heavens and earth by fire.

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. When God promised to shake all the nations with His judgment, He was speaking of both present judgment on evil nations and future judgment during the last days. ⁶Before Christ's first advent there was a general shaking of empires. Persia fell; Alexander's dominion was divided and gradually shattered before the might of Rome; Rome herself was torn with civil wars. Ultimately the culmination will be the establishment of the kingdom of Jehovah on earth! All of God's activities in the heavens, the earth, the sea, the dry land, and the nations are moving toward one great end! Their desire will be toward the Deliverer Himself to come. The people of the world and all creation have had longings for this deliverance since the days of Adam. The house they were building, poor though it was, would bring blessings to all the people of the world, and the ultimate establishment of the earthly Davidic Millennium kingdom, for His glory will fill the Millennial Temple (Ezek.43:5). The shaking will have to come first. ⁷The Lord Jesus Christ, the very glory of Heaven itself, would walk the very grounds upon which they worked. They did not know it, but they were building the Temple that would greet Jesus one day! This is just a reminder that we never know what we are doing and how God will use our efforts for His glory in the future.

2:8 The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. God is saying that if had He desired

⁶ <http://biblehub.com/haggai/2-7.htm>

⁷ http://www.sermonnotebook.org/old%20testament/Haggai%20_1-9.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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the silver and gold, He could have easily provided it because it all belonged to Him.

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. The important thing was not how the house that they were building compared with the former; rather, it was the place that this house would occupy in God's overall program. Verses 6-9 are the last of the threefold encouragement to them. **3)** His Program of Judgment which will result in His filling this insignificant house with His Personal Peace (v.7). The latter shall be greater.

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. The four and twentieth day... the ninth month... the second year... This is the third message of Haggai two months after the second one, delivered in December 18th. Haggai's message sought to demonstrate that while their disobedience caused God's blessings to be withheld; delayed, their obedience would cause His blessings to be released. Zechariah began his prophetic ministry one month earlier (Zech.1:1).

2:11 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; ask now the priests concerning the law, saying. Now, we see that this message is directed to the priests who give the rulings of the Law. They are the ones that are well versed on the Law. It was the function of the priests to teach and interpret the Law; and the prophet is going to give them an illustration that will show them the situation they are in. They are hit with a series of questions.

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. This verse sounds rather strange to our ears, but to the Jews having hundreds of laws governing all aspects of lives, made perfect sense. Well another interpretation of this is: *"If a garment containing a piece of consecrated meat touches food, does the garment make the food holy?"* This law had to do with understanding what was holy and what was not. The holy meat is meat dedicated for sacrifice (Jer.11:15). When the unholy touches holy, the holy object becomes defiled. And Haggai asks the question whether holiness may be transferred from that second consecrated object (the skirt) to a third (bread, wine, oil, or any other meat). The priests answer with no! It was assumed that holiness can be transferred from a consecrated object to a person or other object (Lev.6:27). They could not transport holiness in such a simple manner, even though the garment is holy (set apart) because of the sanctified meat. This holiness can't be imparted to other objects by the garment. So, holiness will not rub off on others, but contamination will.

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. While holiness may not be attained through indirect contact, one defiled by contact with a dead body pollutes all that he contacts. A healthy person cannot communicate his health to a dying person, but a dying person can communicate his disease to a healthy one. The Mosaic system clearly taught that ceremonial cleanness was not transferrable from one person or thing to another, but ceremonial uncleanness was. To understand this, think about water. If you put dirty water into clean water, it will all be dirty. If you put clean water into dirty water, it will still all be dirty. Haggai imposed this second question: Could a person touch another person and make him unclean? The answer was

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obviously yes. Haggai had made his point: you can transmit defilement from one thing or person to another, but you can't transmit sanctity.

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 lets the priest know this is referring to the people, the nation, and the work of their hands. The people still didn't deserve to be called "*My people*", but they are still referred to as, "*this people*" again (1:2). *The work of their hands*: The people working on the Temple couldn't impart any holiness to it, but they could defile it by their sins. *Whatever they offered was unclean*. Even during their religious observances and sacrificial offerings, they were not pleasing to God. God couldn't bless the people, the nation, or the work of their hands, or their offerings the way He wanted to, because they were unclean. ⁸God wanted more than a temple built. He wanted the hearts of the people to be fully devoted to Him. God didn't want a big house filled with empty hearts. He didn't want animal sacrifice unless it was accompanied by a living sacrifice of the people. Their hearts clearly were not centered on Him. Their sinful ways had contaminated their consecrated offerings to God. It is always important that we keep ourselves clean before the Lord. All those questions now should have moved upon them to repent. Getting right with God involves reflection and repentance.

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:— Haggai was praying, imploring them to consider (the four and twentieth day of the ninth month); reflect carefully; think ahead from this day onward of what would come to pass; before a stone was laid upon another stone in the temple. Why? Because when you look backward in the next verse, they could consider to look forward this four and twentieth day of the ninth month for things were about to change.

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. Since those days—the days they were disobedient. ⁹The people needed to give careful consideration. They needed to remember that before they began to obey the Lord by rebuilding the temple (1:12), they had been disobedient to the Mosaic Covenant. They were going broke economically and spiritually. In those days the farmer found less than expected. When he came to a heap of grain expecting to find twenty measures, he found only ten. When he went to the pressfat (wine or oil press or vat) expecting to get fifty measures of wine or oil, he found that there were only twenty. There was no way that he could get ahead. Their entire nation was in an economic decline—all because they had disobeyed God.

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. The reason this happened was because Jehovah was sending judgment upon them in the form of all kinds of catastrophes—blasting wind, mildew, and hail. Though these catastrophes took their toll on the economy, they did not achieve their purpose of causing the people to repent and obey Jehovah. Instead of building the house of Jehovah, for which He had brought them back to the Land for, they turned not to God's house, but to their own houses. Their past disobedience rendered every spiritual exercise vain, but they still didn't return to the Lord. That's all God wanted. He wanted His people to turn to

⁸ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1997-06-01-The-Blessings-of-Obedience/>

⁹ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/haggai.pdf>

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Him with a whole heart and put Him in the center of life. As in Matthew 6:33, they were to put God's interests first; seek His plan. God is not out to get us, but to help us!

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. This is the third time Haggai admonishes them to consider the day (v.15; v.18-twice). As God speaks through Haggai, He says consider now this day; consider from this day forward; from the day as it is now, and even going back to when the foundation of the Lord's Temple was laid. Why? Even though they had hardships; suffered shortages of staples, the Lord revealed that He would now "bless" them, beginning that "very day," the twenty-fourth of the ninth month. He didn't want them looking backward anymore; yes, punishment had to run its course, and the past is the past, but now look forward to God's promises! –His blessings—the day this prophecy is being given! Look at it like this: Abundant blessings begin the moment you obey the Lord!

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. ¹⁰All gardeners understand this principle. You don't plant today and harvest tomorrow. It takes a few weeks for the plant to poke it way through the soil and even more weeks and months for the fruit to ripen for harvest. Historically it took the Jews four years to finish rebuilding the temple. No doubt they faced continued opposition and discouragement. But by starting to rebuild they were planting fresh seed in the ground. It hadn't come up yet, but God is saying, *"Don't worry. You're going to reap an abundant harvest eventually. Just be faithful and I promise the harvest will come in."* Even before it's seen, it's already done by God!

2:20 And again the word of the Lord came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, This is Haggai's fourth and final message, addressing Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah in the four and twentieth day of the month. The message comes on the same date as the previous one.

2:21 Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth;– The first message began with the leader and ends with the leader. However, it seems to be good news. God will cause great commotions, and bring great things to pass. Haggai's prophecy message speaks about a shaking of the heavens (plural) and earth. He also talked about a shaking in verse 6. We can assume that it is the same and at a later date—the coming of the earthy Davidic Millennial Kingdom of God.

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. The first part of this verse refers back to verse 7, telling Zerubbabel of future events which was to encourage him. God constantly said "I will", meaning what He would do. *I will shake... I will overthrow... I will destroy... I will overthrow...* and in the next verse, *I will take...and make — "I" is understood*). It sounds like God will pit one against another; they

¹⁰ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1997-06-01-The-Blessings-of-Obedience/>
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will end-up fighting each other—by the sword of his brother. God will cause panic and confusion in the kingdoms and armies and they will kill each other. This reminds me of Gideon and his 300 soldiers against the Midianites in Judges 7:22. The 300 blew the trumpets and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow man... God's promises will come to pass!

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. Three things stand out in this verse:

1. **Zerubbabel is called my servant**, not governor. The Lord promised to "make . . . Zerubbabel" His "servant." The title "My servant" is often Messianic in the Old Testament. It is his descendant Jesus the Messiah who will be the One who will accomplish God's plan.
2. **Zerubbabel will be like a signet**. The signet ring was a symbol of honor, authority, and power. It corresponds to a king's scepter. The ring used by the king for signing of letters and official documents. Likewise, Zerubbabel's ministry was to bear the mark of honor and authority. He would carry with him the authority of Jehovah and would represent Him in all that he did.
3. **Zerubbabel is chosen by God**. Haggai affirms Zerubbabel's position with God. He is proclaiming it to him. This should give Zerubbabel great assurance and confidence, for God has chosen him and is doing all the work to make it possible.

Notice the verse begins, in that day. The messiah will return in that day, but in the meantime, Zerubbabel will be God's servant with the honor and authority, chosen by God to carry out the plan of God.

SUMMARY:

2:1-9 Now, it is the seventh month, in which Haggai the prophet speaks to them. He asks a question as to who is left that had seen the former temple in its glory and in comparison of how they see it now. They were not to be disillusioned or discouraged for their strength is always found in God, for God would be with them. He had already made a Covenant with them when they came out of Egypt. They had no need to fear because God's Spirit remains with them (2:1-5). God says, yet once, referring to when He shook the mountain on Mt Sinai. If God did it once, He can do it again; In a little while, it's prophesized that He will shake the heavens, earth, sea, dry land, and the nations; and will lead to the desire to the Deliverer to come. God will fill the coming temple; the Millennial Temple with His Spirit. Silver and gold will be no problem for He owns it all. And they will see that the latter temple will far surpass the grandeur of the former temple of Solomon. The Lord of host will give peace in that latter temple. The new temple was only a shadow of the greater things that were to come (2:6-9).

2:10-19 ¹¹Haggai has asked several rhetorical questions; but now the Lord directs him to the priests with a specific legal question (2:10-11). Whenever anyone had a question pertaining to the Mosaic law, a priest was the one to consult (Duet.33:8-10). The question posed by Haggai concerns the transmission of holiness (2:12)

¹¹ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1997-06-01-The-Blessings-of-Obedience/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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and of uncleanness (2:13). Is it possible for the garment with sacrificial meat wrapped in it, and touches other food, will the garment communicate its *holiness* to other food (2:10-12)? The priests reply based on Leviticus 6:27 teaches that if anyone touches holy meat directly he will become *holy*, but nowhere does Scripture "say that indirect contact will sanctify a man. The garment in which meat was wrapped became *holy*, but could not be passed to a third object. Haggai ⁶ makes it clear that *holiness* will not rub off on others but contamination will, and the people, the nation, the work of their hands and even their offerings were unclean (2:14).

The harvest did not fulfill expectations. They came up short. The Lord struck with blasting, mildew, and hail in all the works of their hands, and whatever they offered but they did not turn to the Lord. And Haggai wants them to consider one more thing, the date of this prophecy. Even though they hadn't seen it, they were to give careful thought from the day onward that the Lord would surely bless them (2:15-19).

2:20-23 God sends a message of encouragement to Zerubbabel, the governor, by the prophet Haggai. He's a pre-picture of the Lord, and he needed encouragement. God's faithful men and women need encouragement from time to time. God gives him five "I wills" Now that's pretty plain as to God's intentions for Zerubbabel. Whatever work God has begun in you, He is well able to finish it. In every event He has the final say-so!

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