

# Hebrew Supporting Materials

## Translation of Haggai

### Chapter 1

1. In Darius the king's second year, in the sixth month (and) on the first day of the month, Yahweh's word came by Haggai the prophet's hand to Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and (also) to Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest:
2. "Thus says Yahweh of Armies: These people say the time hasn't come, the time to build Yahweh's house."
3. Then Yahweh's word came by the hand of Haggai the prophet:
4. "Is it time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, yet this house is devastated?"
5. So now, thus says Yahweh of Armies: Set your heart on your ways.
6. You all sowed much, yet return little. (You) eat, but without satisfaction. (You) drink, but cannot be full. (One) wears (clothes), but he cannot (get) warm. And the one who hires himself out hires himself out to a ripped bag.
7. Thus says Yahweh of Armies: Set your heart on your ways.
8. Go upon the hill and bring (back) wood and build the house so that I might be pleased with it and that I might be glorified, says Yahweh.
9. (You) turned to much, and look! A little. Then you brought (it) home and I blew on it (blew it away). Due to what? Yahweh of Armies declares. Due to my house, which itself is devastated, (even) though (each) man is running to his own house.
10. Therefore, the skies have withheld dew over you, and the land has withheld its produce.
11. And I called (forth) a drought on the land, and on the hills, and on the grain, and on the wine, and on the oil, and on what the ground brings forth, and on man, and on beast and on every labor of your hands."
12. Then they listened (obeyed), Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the entire remnant of the people, to the voice of Yahweh their God, and to Haggai the prophet's words, when Yahweh their God sent him. And the people were afraid before Yahweh.
13. Then Haggai, the messenger of Yahweh, spoke with Yahweh's message for the people: "I am with you," Yahweh declares.
14. Then Yahweh roused the spirit of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the entire remnant of the people, so that they came and did work on the house of Yahweh of Armies their God,
15. on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in Darius the king's second year.

## Chapter 2

1. (Now,) in the seventh (month), on the twenty-first day of the month, Yahweh's word came by Haggai the prophet's hand,
2. "Say to Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people:
3. Who is among you all who remain that saw this house in its former glory? And how are you seeing it now? Isn't it as (though) it (were) like nothing in your eyes?
4. But now, be strong, Zerubbabel, Yahweh declares. And be strong Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. And be strong all people of the land, Yahweh declares. And work (do), for I am with you, Yahweh of Armies declares,
5. (according to) the thing that I covenanted when you went out from Egypt. And my Spirit (spirit) is standing in your midst. Do not fear.
6. For thus says Yahweh of Armies: One more (thing); it is small: (namely,) I am (going to) shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land,
7. and I will shake all the nations and (then) the desire of all the nations will come, and (then) I will fill this house (with) glory, says Yahweh of Armies.
8. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, Yahweh of Armies declares.
9. Great will be the glory of this latter house—more (so) than the former, says Yahweh of Armies. And in this place I will give peace, Yahweh of Armies declares."
10. On the twenty-fourth (day) of the ninth (month), in the second year of Darius, Yahweh's word came to Haggai the prophet:
11. "Thus says Yahweh of Armies: Ask the priests (about the) law, saying,
12. 'If a man picks up holy meat with the corner of his garment, and (then) he touches the bread with his corner, and (then) the stew, then the wine, then oil, and (then) all the food, will it be holy?'" Then the priests answered and said, "No."
13. Then Haggai said, "If an unclean person touches all these, will it be unclean?" Then the priests answered and said, "It will be unclean."
14. Then Haggai answered and said, "So (also is) this people, and so (also is) this nation before me, Yahweh declares, and so (also are) all the works of their hands, and what they offer there, it is unclean.
15. So now, set your hearts from this day and on(ward): Before placing stone on stone in Yahweh's temple,
16. when they were, (one) came to a heap of twenty and (then) there were ten; he came to a wine vat to scoop fifty purah and there were twenty.
17. I struck you with blight and with mildew and with hail, every word of your hands, yet none of you (was) to me.
18. Set your heart from this day and on(ward); from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that Yahweh's temple was laid, set your hearts:
19. Is there still seed in the storehouse? And neither the vine, nor the fig (tree), nor the pomegranate (tree), nor the olive tree has bore (fruit). From this day (on) I will bless you.

20. Then Yahweh's word came (a) second (time) to Haggai, on the twenty-fourth day of the month:
21. "Say to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah: I am (going to) shake the heavens and the earth.
22. And I will overthrow (the) throne(s) of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and I will overthrow (the) chariot and its riders, and horses will fall and their riders, (each) man by his brothers' sword.
23. On that day, Yahweh of Armies declares, I will take you Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, my servant, Yahweh declares, and I will appoint you as the signet ring. For I have chosen you, Yahweh of Armies declares.

# Textual and Grammatical/Syntactical Notes

## Chapter 1

### Week 1

- 1:2
  - “Yahweh of Armies (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)”
    - Traditionally rendered “the LORD of Hosts (e.g. KJV, ESV).”
    - יְהוָה is the proper name the God of Israel gives to himself (Ex 3:14–15), translated with all caps LORD coming from the influence (most principally) of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT) rendering of Κύριος (lord).
      - There is, however, already a word for “lord” in Hebrew (אֲדֹנָי).
      - The name signifies God’s self-determining power to be whatever and whomever he wants to be (see the passage in Exodus), thus making the use of another term in its place ironic at best and at worst improper.
    - צְבָאוֹת is the Hebrew word for a military force. Often it is used also to refer to heavenly bodies (such as stars, moons, etc.). Angels and other heavenly creatures are often referred to or compared to the heavenly bodies. Thus, the term probably refers to Yahweh’s heavenly army, i.e. the angels, cherubim, seraphim, etc.
      - “Hosts” is simply an old English term for army, so it has been replaced with its modern equivalent.
  - Note on the phrase “this people”... (Smith)
- 1:4
  - Note on “paneled houses”
- 1:5
  - “Set your heart on your ways (שִׁמוּ לְבַבְכֶם)”
    - This likely is roughly equivalent to “consider / reflect on / ponder your ways.”
      - “Heart” in Hebrew can indicate the will, intellect, mind, emotional center, etc. of a person.
      - The term signifies the “inward part,” so to speak, of a person. What we break down into several categories (brain, mind, will, emotion, etc.) the Bible generally speaks of all in the same fashion.
- 1:6
  - “(You) drink, but cannot be full (וְאַיִן לְשִׂבְרָה)”

- The term usually means "to get drunk," but doesn't have to. The Scriptures seem to have a category for drinking to satisfaction without the negative connotations that the words "drunk" or "buzzed" have for us today.
- 1:9
  - “Yahweh of Armies declares (נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)”
    - A prophetic formula whose use is sometimes unclear. It likely emphasizes divine authority.<sup>1</sup>
    - The name attached to the word “declares (נְאֻם)” is usually significant.
      - The prophet in question often has a favorite name for Yahweh (Yahweh of Armies, Yahweh God, etc.).
      - Sometimes the name helps emphasize a particular characteristic of Yahweh to bear in mind.
        - Here, Haggai uses “Yahweh of Armies” often; likely wants to emphasize Yahweh’s power (possibly to get the point across that they should obey this powerful God, and that he is able to fulfill all the promises within the book).
- 1:12
  - “Then they listened (וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ)”
    - The word in Hebrew which literally means “listen” is very often a stand-in for obedience.
      - It is used much the way parents might talk to their children: “Listen to me and clean your room!”
      - To listen in this context is to both hear and obey accordingly.

## Chapter 2

- 2:3
  - “How are you seeing it now (וַיִּמְקַח אֶתְכֶם רְאִים אֵתֹךְ עַתָּה)?”
    - The wording of the Hebrew suggests that they may have been standing at the temple site as Haggai preached this message.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Contrary to many scholarly assertions, the so-called ‘oracle formula’ נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת does not necessarily mark the closure of an oracle, and in this instance appears to interrupt the flow of the sentence. In this case the formula serves a more rhetorical function of validating the divine authenticity of the message.” M. F. Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 24. Emphasis added.

<sup>2</sup> “Yet in other instances of questions utilizing the participle of רָאָה the speaker is asking what the hearer is seeing at the moment of inquiry (Jer 1:11, 13; 24:3; Amos 7:8; 8:2; Zech 4:2; 5:2), in accord with the participle’s use for the ‘actual present’ (Rogland 2003: 10–11 n. 54)— that is, to refer to what is actually occurring at the moment of speaking. Thus, רָאָה should be understood as referring to the actual present, indicating that the conversation between Haggai and his audience is taking place at the temple site as they are observing the ruin.” Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 36–37. Emphasis added.

- 2:5

- "... (according to) the thing that I covenanted (אֲשֶׁר-כָּרַתִּי)..."
  - This particular phrase is quite awkward in Hebrew. It could be translated and understood several ways:
    - "Do (work)... the thing..." – הַדָּבָר (the word/ thing) could be the object of the word "do/make/work" in verse 4. On this translation, Yahweh is commanding them to do something specifically connected to the Exodus and the covenant at Sinai. This is supported by the word translated "covenanted (כָּרַתִּי, lit. 'cut')," which is usually associated with the making of a covenant.
      - Then the interpreter must decide what the word/thing connected to the Exodus/Sinai actually refers to. I am inclined to think this refers to the instructions on building the temple at Sinai.<sup>3</sup>
      - I prefer this option, though option #2 is certainly possible.
    - "The word that I covenanted... do not fear (it)" – Max Rogland has suggested that הַדָּבָר should be connected to the verb that comes much later (יִירָא "fear").<sup>4</sup> In this case, Yahweh would be referring (like the above translation) to something connected to the Exodus/Sinai, but he would not be telling them to do it, but not to fear it. This is a rarer construction, but Rogland does provide other examples.
      - This could also be understood as "do not fear (to do) the thing..." It would require supplying words not there, but it is still possible.
    - "This is the word/thing I covenanted..." This translation smooths out the confusing aspects of the phrase, but is grammatically strange and does not explain what the phrase is doing here any better than the other options. Some translations (e.g. NIV, CSB) take this approach, but it is hard to defend grammatically.
    - Omit – The Septuagint (LXX) leaves the whole phrase out, going from "Yahweh of Armies declares" straight to "And I am with you..." This is tempting, because the sentence and even the thought makes more sense this way. As well, the LXX is an old text that may reflect an older manuscript tradition. Nevertheless, we have no Hebrew manuscripts which omit the phrase, so it is best to handle the text as is.

- 2:6

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<sup>3</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 39.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 38–39.

- “One more (thing); it is small (עֹד אֶחָת מְעַט הָיָא)...”
  - These phrases are notoriously difficult. A few different translations have been offered:
    - “Once again, in a little while...” – Most English translations take the מְעַט הָיָא (lit. “it is little”) as expressing time (“in a little [while]”). The previous phrase (עֹד אֶחָת) then is taken as expressing a repeat of a previous action.
    - “One more (thing); it is small...” – Max Rogland has argued that the above translation does not reflect how these phrases actually get used in Hebrew. He suggests that עֹד אֶחָת be taken “as a nominal phrase meaning ‘yet one more (thing).’”<sup>5</sup> The second phrase (מְעַט הָיָא) then would not indicate shortness of time, but the smallness of the “one more thing.” Thus, Yahweh would be calling what is coming next to be comparatively small (possibly in contrast with the Exodus from Egypt alluded to in v. 5).
  - How you take these two phrases can have an effect on the interpretation here (see the interpretive options below).
    - The temporal translation would lend greater support to the “Foreign Wealth” approach, because the possible fulfillments from Persia (Ezra 6:8–12; 7:12–26) or Seleucus IV (2 Macc 3:3) were closer in time than the coming of the Messiah.
    - The “one more thing” translation leaves more room for the Messianic/nations interpretations. The way the prophets talk about time, however, is often different than we expect (e.g. Rev 1:1; 22:20). “Soon” is a relative term, and is often longer than we expect in the Bible.
- Heb 12:26–28
  - The only NT quote of Haggai comes from Hebrews using this verse.
  - The author interprets what the phrase (עֹד אֶחָת) means: “‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain (Heb 12:27 ESV).”
    - He then connects this with an eschatological reality: “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb 12:28 ESV)...”
    - He also contrasts the shaking of the earth at Mount Sinai with the shaking “now (Heb 12:26 ESV).”
    - This all suggests that the author considers this prophecy to have fulfillment for the church, and indeed will have its

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 40.

completion when we see the “removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made (i.e. creation at the end of the age).”

- 2:7
  - “and (then) the desire of all the nations will come (וּבָאוּ תְּחִמְתָּת כָּל־ (דְּהוֹנִים)...”
    - There are two main interpretations of this prophecy:
      - The Plundering of Foreign Wealth<sup>6</sup> – The shaking of the nations in this interpretation is Yahweh’s “shaking loose” their wealth from them in order to fill the temple with them. The “glory” Yahweh promises to fill the house with would then be the glory of opulence and splendor of riches.
        - In favor of this interpretation:
          - In v. 3, glory likely refers to opulence when referencing Solomon’s Temple. So, a similar use of the term “glory” is not far-fetched.
          - 2:8 references gold and silver, making a connection between this prediction and Yahweh’s assurance quite strong.
        - Against this interpretation:
          - The text nowhere actually says that Yahweh will bring in riches, nor is the promise of opulence explicitly made.
          - The Second Temple, by all accounts, paled in comparison with Solomon’s in terms of appearance. A veiled reference to Herod’s Temple (which is really a remodeling of the same temple) does not necessarily fit, either, since foreign wealth was not brought in to build it.
      - The Messiah<sup>7</sup> – The phrase “the desire of all nations” has a long history of association with Christ. Both Rabbinic and Christian interpreters have taken the phrase this way.<sup>8</sup> The “glory” which was to fill the house would be the glory of Christ’s presence in when he came to the temple.
        - In favor of this interpretation:
          - The coming of the Messiah is elsewhere associated with glory in the OT (e.g. Is. 40:5; 60:1) and even in the NT (Luke 2:32).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> e.g. Anthony R. Petterson, “Haggai,” in *The NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible*, ed. D.A. Carson et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), paragraphs 19304–305. Accordance edition; see also Max Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 40.

<sup>7</sup> Slightly favored in Alden, *Haggai*, 586–87.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 586.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 586.



- The glory of Christ is clearly higher than that of any temple, but especially more so than the Second Temple, as mentioned above.
    - Against this interpretation:
      - The verb translated “will come” is actually plural, while the word “desire” (תְּהַמְדֵהוּ) is singular. The singular “desire” could be considered collectively (i.e. one shared desire which actually includes many things), but it is not normal in Hebrew to refer to a single person with a plural noun.
      - History shows that the Messiah was not actually desired by the nations before the gospel came (rather, they [Rome, along with Israel] rejected and killed him). To refer to him this way, in light of passages like Is 53, seems strange.
  - I want to put forward another possibility:
    - The Nations – “the desire which is the nations...” The construct phrase “desire of all the nations” could be taken adjectivally (i.e. with “the nations” describing the “desire” in some way.<sup>10</sup> This would make the desire something which is “made up of” the nations. On this interpretation, Yahweh would be predicting the coming in of the Gentiles to the people of God. They are a desirable “treasure,” if you will, and their filling of the temple would result in glory.
      - In favor of this interpretation:
        - This would explain the plural verb “will come.”
        - Other prophetic predictions of the Gentiles coming in associate this event with glory (cf. Is 66:18).
        - This would be much more glorious than earthly treasures (as, for example, Rev 22 demonstrates).
        - Heb 12:26–28 associates this verse with an eschatological kingdom to come, which favors both the “Messianic” and “the Nations” interpretations.
      - Against this interpretation:
        - This isn’t the most natural way to understand a construct phrase.

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<sup>10</sup> See Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 148–154.

- It requires a “spiritualizing” of the temple, rather than the actual physical temple. The other two interpretations can have a more literal referent. However, the Scriptures do this in several clear places (e.g. Rev 22).
- 2:13
  - See Num 19:11–16 for the answer to this question:
  - “Whoever touches the dead body of any person shall be unclean seven days. He shall cleanse himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so be clean. But if he does not cleanse himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not become clean. Whoever touches a dead person, the body of anyone who has died, and does not cleanse himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from Israel; because the water for impurity was not thrown on him, he shall be unclean. His uncleanness is still on him. ‘This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean seven days. <sup>15</sup> And every open vessel that has no cover fastened on it is unclean. Whoever in the open field touches someone who was killed with a sword or who died naturally, or touches a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean seven days (Num 19:11–16 ESV).’”
- 2:16
  - “... to scoop fifty purah (לְחֶשֶׁף חֲמִשָּׁים פּוּרָה)...”
    - The word for a winepress (פּוּרָה) seems to also be a unit of measurement.<sup>11</sup>
  - “when they were (מִהַיּוֹתָם)...”
    - The awkwardness of this phrase in my translation reflects the awkwardness in the Hebrew. Scholars have a hard time understanding it.<sup>12</sup>
    - The point seems clear, however: Yahweh is recalling the circumstances of the first prophecy.
- 2:17
  - “... yet none of you (was) to me (וְאִין־אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי)...”
    - There are two ways this difficult phrase could be understood:
      - “and you had nothing directed towards me”<sup>13</sup>
        - This translation suggests that Yahweh’s displeasure came from what they did not give to him. This would probably be service (in terms of repairing the temple).
      - “and you did not turn to me”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 51.

<sup>12</sup> e.g. Ibid, 50–51. Rogland’s explanation and translation are difficult to understand.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 51.

<sup>14</sup> Alden, *Haggai*, 589–590.

- Most English translations take this approach. The very wooden “there was not you to me” probably indicates that the people were not “to” Yahweh in the sense that they did not turn to him (which is part of what the first prophecy chastises them for, indicated by Yahweh’s blessing them for listening to and fearing him).
- 2:18
  - “from the day that Yahweh’s temple was laid (לְמִן־הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יָסַד הַיְיָ לַיהוָה)...”
    - What day does this refer to?
      - The statement just before references the day that the prophecy is occurring.
      - This would be an awkward way (both grammatically and logically) to refer to the initial foundation of the temple in 536 B.C.
      - More likely, this is a way of referring to the work they have just begun.
        - Though the temple foundation had been laid, it probably needed repair, having been left alone for over a decade. This amount of work may constitute enough effort to be considered a new “laying.”
- 2:19
  - “Is there still seed (הֲעוֹד הַזֵּרַע)...?”
    - The point of this question is questionable. Is the lack of seed a negative or positive state of affairs?
      - It would be easy to think that it is negative, especially when the rest of the verse points out the lack of fruit for the exiles.
      - However, Max Rogland suggests that the point of acknowledging the lack of seed points to the fact that it is no longer in the storehouse *because it has been planted*.<sup>15</sup>
      - The idea of the seed being planted does not tell us whether the exiles have experienced any change in their fortunes agriculturally.
        - The final promise “from this day (on) I will bless you” strengthens the notion that the people have not yet experienced the fruit of their labors.
        - This would make the tone of this section one of an absolute difference between before the current temple’s foundation and that of the days to come. In other words, due to their obedience, their fortunes are about to turn.

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<sup>15</sup> Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 54.

- This would serve as great motivation for them to keep going, which is generally Haggai's concern in chapter 2.
- 2:21
  - "I am (going to) shake (אָנִי מְרַעֵשׁ)..."  
    - Same wording as 2:6 (though "the sea" and "the dry land" are not repeated).
    - The participle ("shaking") in this kind of construction can be simply a present tense ("I am shaking"), but more likely indicates some kind of immanence ("I am going to," or "I am about to").<sup>16</sup>
      - Prophetic declarations, however, often operate at a much different timeline than we expect (e.g. Rev 1:1). This wording does not necessarily mean that the fulfillment must take place in a certain time frame.
        - It does suggest, however, that it is in the future, whether near or distant.
- 2:23
  - "On that day (בְּיוֹם הַהוּא)..."  
    - A common phrase in the prophets. Signifies a future day, often very distant, and sometimes associated with the Day of the Lord (Yahweh's Day).
    - The phrase could relate to the end of the previous verse or to the beginning of the following.
      - Either:
        - "their riders will fall, each man by his brothers' sword on that day."
      - Or:
        - "On that day, Yahweh declares, I will take you..."
      - However, no translations that I know of take it the former way, nor did my resources mention it as a possibility, so the fault may be in my own understanding of the possibilities.
  - "I will appoint you as the signet ring (וְשַׂמְתִּיךָ כְּחוּתָם)..."  
    - A signet ring is a mark of kingly authority.<sup>17</sup>
    - The passage shares language that gets used of David and even the Messiah (i.e. "take [2 Sam 7:8; Ps 78:70]," "servant [1 Sam 7:5, 8]," and "chosen [Is 42:1]").<sup>18</sup>
    - Combine these factors with the Jeremiah's pronouncement over Jehoiachin that he will be removed as Yahweh's signet ring (Jer 22:24), and the overtones of the Messiah are overwhelming.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>17</sup> Alden, *Haggai*, 591.

<sup>18</sup> Petterson, *Haggai*, paragraph 19324.

- As far as we know, Zerubbabel never ascended to any high position of political power.
  - He is, however, mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matt 1:12–13. He is the grandson of Jehoiachin, in the line of king David, and the ancestor of King Jesus.
    - Interestingly, Luke’s genealogy leaves Jehoiachin out (Luke 3:27). This is possibly an intentional indication that the line “skips” Jehoiachin and goes straight Zerubbabel, as in Jeremiah’s prophecy.
  - Thus, this seems to be a promise of Zerubbabel’s involvement in the “greater glory” to come to the temple (either in the Messiah, in the incoming of the nations, or more likely, both).