The Book of Haggai

Chapter 2

The Glory of the Latter Temple Shall Be Greater

Theme: *"The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former," says the LORD of hosts. "And in this place I will give peace." (Haggai 2:9 NKJV)*

Objective:
To encourage believers who feel discouraged by small beginnings, to discover how Haggai's prophecy points directly to Christ, and to learn how God transforms weakness into glory through His presence.

I. Introduction and Review

Review Chapter 1:

- The people neglected God's house.
- God called them to *"consider their ways."*
- They obeyed and resumed the rebuilding.
- God encouraged them with the promise: *"I am with you." (Haggai 1:13)*

Now, in Chapter 2, a new challenge emerges.

The people are working again, but many become discouraged.

The new Temple seems insignificant compared to Solomon's magnificent Temple.

Opening Question

Have you ever worked hard on something for God and felt that your efforts were too small to matter?

II. The Discouragement of Comparison (Haggai 2:1-5)

A. Looking Back Instead of Looking Up

God asks: *"Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now?" (v.3 NKJV)*

Many older Jews remembered Solomon's Temple.

Compared to the former glory, this rebuilding project seemed unimpressive.

Their comparison produced discouragement.

Reflections

Why do comparisons often discourage spiritual growth?

- What comparisons discourage Christians today?
    - churches
    - ministries
    - careers
    - families
    - spiritual growth

B. God's Threefold Command

Three times God says: *"Be strong." (vv.4)*

To:

- Zerubbabel
- Joshua the high priest
- All the people

Important Principle

God does not deny their weakness.

Instead, He redirects their attention from the building to His presence.

"For I am with you." (v.4 NKJV)

Patristic Insight

> **St. John Chrysostom:**
> "The power of God's work does not depend on the greatness of the worker but on the presence of God."

The value of ministry is not measured by visible results but by faithfulness.

C. The Presence of the Holy Spirit

God reminds them: *"My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!" (v.5 NKJV)*

This recalls:

- the Exodus
- God's presence in the Tabernacle
- God's covenant faithfulness

Application

The same Holy Spirit who strengthened Israel strengthens the Church today.

III. Christ in Haggai 2: The Greater Glory (Haggai 2:6-9)

A. The Shaking of the Nations

"I will shake heaven and earth." (v.6 NKJV)

This prophecy extends beyond Haggai's day. It points toward God's redemptive plan for all nations.

St. Paul in Hebrews applies this passage to the coming Kingdom. In Hebrews 12:26-28

God shakes temporary things so that eternal things remain.

Reflections

What things in our lives may God be shaking today?

- self-reliance
- pride
- material security
- comfort

B. Christ Enters the Temple

The rebuilt Temple lacked many things:

- the Ark of the Covenant
- the heavenly fire

Yet God says: *"The glory of this latter temple shall be greater."*

What makes the Second Temple greater than Solomon's Temple?

- The Lord Jesus Christ Himself would enter it.
- He would teach there.
- He would heal there.
- He would reveal the Father there.

Patristic Insight

> **St. Cyril of Alexandria**
>
> "The true glory of the Temple was not gold or architecture but the presence of Christ, who came as God incarnate."

C. The Prince of Peace

God concludes: *"In this place I will give peace." (v.9 NKJV)*

This peace ultimately comes through Christ.

Isaiah calls Him: *"Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6 NKJV)*

Through His Cross He reconciles humanity to God.

Reflections

What kind of peace does Christ offer that the world cannot?

IV. Holiness Cannot Be Borrowed (Haggai 2:10-19)

God asks the priests about ceremonial purity, and they answer correctly. Uncleanness spreads easily.

Holiness does not automatically spread.

God's' people assumed that rebuilding the Temple would automatically make them holy.

God teaches otherwise.

The building project must be accompanied by transformed hearts.

Application

Christianity is not:

- church attendance alone
- ministry activity alone
- religious appearance alone

God desires inward transformation. The true Temple God seeks to cleanse is the human heart.

Reflection Question

What outward religious activities can sometimes substitute for genuine spiritual growth?

V. Zerubbabel and the Coming Messiah (Haggai 2:20-23)

God says to Zerubbabel: *"I will make you like a signet ring."*

A signet ring represented:

- authority
- ownership
- royal legitimacy

Zerubbabel was a descendant of David.

This promise points beyond him to Christ.

Christ the True Signet Ring

Jesus is:

- the Son of David
- the true King
- the One through whom God's kingdom is established forever

Matthew's genealogy begins by showing that Christ comes through Zerubbabel's family line.

Patristic Insight

> **St. Jerome,** saw Zerubbabel as a figure of Christ who restores God's people after exile and establishes the true spiritual Temple.

VI. Practical Applications

1. Don't Despise Small Beginnings

God often starts great works in humble ways.

- Bethlehem
- the manger

- twelve disciples
- a mustard seed

Faithfulness matters more than size.

2. God's Presence Is Greater Than Visible Success

The Jews focused on what they lacked.

God focused on His presence.

Ask: **Am I evaluating my life by God's presence or by worldly measurements?**

3. Seek Inner Holiness

Religious activity cannot replace repentance.

Allow Christ to rebuild the Temple of your heart.

4. Trust God's Kingdom During Times of Shaking

When circumstances become unstable, remember:

God shakes temporary things to establish eternal things.

Key Verse to Memorize

> *"Yet now be strong... and work; for I am with you," says the LORD of hosts. (Haggai 2:4 NKJV)*

Closing Summary

Haggai 2 teaches that God's glory is not measured by outward appearance but by His presence. The rebuilt Temple looked weaker than Solomon's, yet it became greater because Christ Himself entered it. The chapter reminds believers not to be discouraged by small beginnings, not to rely on external religion, and not to fear when God shakes the world around them. The true Temple is Christ, and through Him we become living temples filled with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we can be strong, continue the work God has given us, and trust His promise:

"My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!" (Haggai 2:5 NKJV)