



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Haggai 2:20-28

“Zerubbabel, The Signet”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we again thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. We pray Thy blessing upon us as we look again into the prophecy of Haggai. We pray that Thou will guide and direct us into an understanding of this last message of the prophet. May also, as we ponder these words, our own Christian lives been seen in the light of the Scriptures. We pray that Thy blessing may be upon each one present here, and then also Lord, we pray Thy blessing upon the classes that follow. May this be a night in which we are each profited, and built up in our faith, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Tonight we turn to the prophecy of Haggai again, and look at the last of the messages that the prophet gave the remnant after they have returned to the city of Jerusalem, and the subject tonight is “Zerubbabel, the Signet.” After the return of the remnant to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the people in 520 B.C. from the paralysis of lethargy and indifference into which they had fallen in order to get them to rebuild the temple, and so in 520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the people through their prophetic work, and the result was that they began again to rebuilt the temple. The four messages that are contained in the prophecy of Haggai contain four of the messages that he gave at that time. Whether he gave more or not, the Scriptures

are silent on that point, but these are four that God used to stir up the remnant to do the work that they should have done as they came out of the captivity back into the land.

One of the striking things about this last prophecy, this last brief one of four verses is the fact that it addressed contrary to the others to one man of the people, evidently a deeply troubled man. We could imagine that Zerubbabel was very much stirred up over the situation. Only a small remnant of people, Less than fifty thousand had returned to the land, and they were living in the midst of enemies, and particularly in the midst of several large world empires, and I am sure it must have crossed the mind of Zerubbabel, who was the governor of Judah, that it was his responsibility to take care of this insignificant handful of weak people amid the empires of this day. This is no doubt one reason why twice in the prophecy the Lord stresses the fact that he is with them.

In chapter 1 verse 13, we read, “Then Haggai the messenger of the Lord spoke by commission of the Lord to the people saying, I am with you. Declares the Lord.” And then in chapter 2 in verse 4, we read, “But now take courage Zerubbabel declares the Lord. Take courage also Joshua, also son of Josedech, the high priest and all you people of the land take courage declares the Lord and work for I am with you.” So essentially was the experience of these who were back in the land to worry over their situation in the midst of the hostile empires of the day. One is reminded of the situation of Israel in the present day, for they surely too are in the midst of a group of hostile empires who would like to see them removed from the face of the earth.

Two key thoughts are designed to support Zerubbabel, the grandson of King Jehoiakim, and these two thoughts are these. First the certainty of coming worldwide judgment, again the prophet says giving the words of God, “I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.” The thing that he had said, back in chapter 2 verses 6 and 7, “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, (and then verse 7) I will shake all nations,” And so here again he is told by God that there is going to come worldwide judgment, and the second of the

key thoughts is the stability of the Davidic throne, in spite of the experiences of the nation throughout the years that stretch out into the future, Zerubbabel can be sure of the fact that God will remember his promises that he has made to the throne of David, and furthermore he will accomplish those promises through an individual.

Now, these are I think the two key thoughts, the two chief thoughts of this last brief prophecy of Haggai. Let's look now at the first part of it, in which the prophet in verses 20 and 21 gives us the program of God. Let me read the two verses, verse 20 and 21. “Then the word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai on the twenty fourth day of the month saying, speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah saying I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.”

Now, I reiterate because I think it's important that the message is addressed to one man. This message is given to Zerubbabel. A special message for him, further more he is called the governor of Judah, so we can expect the this message has something to do with him, and something to do with his official position as the ruler of the remnant in the land. First a brief word concerning the chronology. You notice that this message came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, and it was the ninth month, and this was the same day on which the third message came and so the third and fourth messages them come on the same day of this ninth month.

Now, what about the content of this particular message? “I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.” The fact that Zerubbabel was in the Davidic line, is very important, and he is addressed here as the governor of Judah. If you go to other parts of the Old Testament you discover that Zerubbabel was the grandson of Jehoiakim

Now, [Jehoiakim 7:24] is also given another name in parts of the Old Testament. His name is Coniah, and you may remember also that Coniah was a disobedient king, and as a result of the disobedience God pronounced judgment on the line from Coniah on. In Jeremiah chapter 22, and verse 30 in a very, very important prophecy it is stated, “Thus says the LORD, Write ye this man, Coniah, write this man childless, a man who will not

prosper in his days: for no man of his decedents will prosper, sitting on the throne of David, or ruling again in Judah.”

Now, this prophecy is so important that it requires the virgin birth of Jesus Christ for the David promises to be fulfilled after this pronouncement of judgment upon the line, because as you can see anyone who comes from the line of Coniah cannot sit upon the throne, and yet our Lord Jesus must have legal right to the throne, and legal right to the throne rests with this line. So he must have the legal right to the throne. He must be a descendant of Coniah, Jehoiakim, and at the same time, he must not be of the seed of Coniah. A very difficult thing to accomplish, and it can only be accomplished by virtue of the virgin birth. That is why our Lord the son of Joseph, who has legal right to the throne may have legal right to the throne, but at the same time being the child of Mary, and the Holy Spirit may be of the Davidic line himself, and thus inherit the Davidic throne.

Now, Zerubbabel is the grandson of Jehoiakim and so Zerubbabel himself cannot really sit upon that Davidic throne himself and be the Messianic figure prophesied in the Old Testament. But now the fact that this prophecy is addressed to Zerubbabel, who is of the royal line, and is the governor or ruler of Judah, raises the question of the Davidic covenant.

Now, you can see that in the prophecy we have something then that is extremely important because the Davidic covenant is one of the three great covenants of the Old Testament. Now remember that in the Old Testament there are three historical covenants that are designed by God to give us in history the fulfillment of the everlasting covenant made between the persons of the Trinity, which affects the redemption of all of the people of God. The covenant of redemption is a covenant made between the persons of the Trinity. The historical covenants the Abrahamic, the Davidic, the new covenant are historical covenants by which the eternal covenant or the covenant of redemption finds its fulfillment in human history. So this then introduces us to the question of the Davidic covenant. It is evident that Zerubbabel, from this prophecy, stands as a representative of

that Davidic density, and so we must say just a word or two about these covenants and specifically the Davidic covenant.

Now, remember the basic biblical covenant is the Abrahamic covenant. The Davidic covenant and the new covenant give us other details. These three covenants are unconditional covenants. That is they are covenants that do not depend upon activities or works of men. They are covenants by which God promises that he will accomplish certain things. He gave certain promises to Abram, promises that had to do with the land, promises that had to do with the seed of Abraham, and ultimate redemption through the seed of Abraham, and promises that had to do with Abraham himself. You remember those promises.

Now, those promises God has said, that he will fulfill. Now of course one might raise the question, “Well, what about the disobedience of Israel?” Well, within the unconditional covenant and the purposes of it, there is found the divine promise to bring the people of God to faith, in order that they might receive the benefit of those promises, so in an unconditional covenant God makes certain promises of certain blessings, and implicit in it also is his determination, his purpose to secure those blessings for the individuals that are the object of the covenant by virtue of his own activity in their hearts bringing them to faith and trust in the Messiah, so from the objective side, we have the divine promises. From the subjective side we have God’s determination to bring faith and trust to the people of God in order that the promises may become those of the people of God. In the Davidic covenant certain other details are added.

Now, the Bible itself is simply a record of the path along which Israel moves to the fulfillment of the covenanted promises, but the Davidic covenant guarantees to Israel a seed. It guarantees to Israel a throne. And it guarantees to Israel a kingdom. Now, this was implicit and I think explicit in one passage in the Abrahamic covenant. You remember in the Abrahamic covenant in the book of Genesis God said to Abraham, that kings would come out of him.

Now, when he said, that kings would come out of him, he in effect gave advance information to the effect that Abraham’s promises would involve a kingdom and a royal seed. Now, when you turn to the Old Testament passages that have to do with the Davidic covenant and we looked at these last year, so I am assuming that some of you at least remember some of the things that were said, then. We looked at passages like 2 Samuel chapter 7 in which we have a passage that has to do with the Davidic covenant. We also looked at 1 Chronicles chapter 17, which is the parallel passage in the chronicle of the Davidic covenant. And we also looked at Psalm 89, which is the lyrical unfolding of the Davidic covenant.

Now, we have all the prophecies in the word of God that have to do with the Davidic covenant, and we looked even at some of these passages. You’ll remember one particularly in Israel chapter 9 in which the prophet writes,

“For a child will be born to us. A son will be given to us, and the government will rest on his shoulders, and his name will be called wonderful, counselor, Mighty God, eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace on the throne of David and over this kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forever more. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.”

So you will notice in these promises with regards to the covenant there is in almost every case, stress on the fact that God unconditionally accomplishes his promises. Now, that’s a very striking prophecy because in the book of Isaiah at this time the people were troubled by the Assyrian line, and also the satanic coalition of other powers that were determined to stamp out the kingdom of Israel, but God promises that the enemies of the children of Israel will be destroyed by not a mighty monster. Not a King Kong or something like that, but by a child. Isn’t it striking? "A child will be born. A son will be

given.” So that the Assyrian lion and the satanic coalition of other powers are going to be destroyed by a little child that is born in Bethlehem, so the burden of government will rest upon a child, but it will rest safely and securely upon him, and the rest of the Old Testament and in the New Testament further details of the Davidic covenant are given.

And you know when you turn into the New Testament and begin to read about the birth of our Lord one of the first promises is that he is going to set on the throne of David for ever and ever, so the Davidic covenant which promises to Israel a kingdom and a royal seed that question is raised right here with the promise made to Zerubbabel governor of Judah.

There are, as you know, many interpreters of the Bible who insist that we should not look for any kind of fulfillment on the earth of these great promises made to Abraham and to David concerning the land and concerning a throne and concerning a kingdom, but I do believe that a study of the word of God will bring us and you to the conviction that there is just a kingdom on the earth. One well-known theologian has said that all of the pre millennial position rests upon one passage in Revelation chapter 20 verse 1 through verse 6.

Now, that is very, very erroneous. That is really a heresy. I am reminded of the statement that Augustine made hundreds of years ago. “Love men slay errors.” So we want to slay that error if possible and the best way to slay it is for you to study those passages for yourself.

Well, now having raised the question of the Davidic covenant, let’s look on and see what else the prophet has to say, and we’ll deal in a moment with why we think that this prophecy is a prophecy to Zerubbabel as a representative of that Davidic line. This is Roman 2 the purposes of God verse 22, and the first part of verse 23. Verse 22 reads, “And I will over throw the thrones of kingdoms. (Incidentally, in the Hebrew text that is singular, and there may be some force in this. I noticed that the translators of the New American Standard Bible have preserved the plural, which I believe is found in the

Authorized Version too, and evidentially they have reason that even though this is singular the word is kissea, [ph18:54] even though it is singular the fact that kingdoms is plural had led them to think that probably should render this, “The thrones of kingdoms.”

Now, there wouldn't be anything wrong with that, but the fact that in the Hebrew text it is singular may point to the fact that there is one primary throne of all of the kingdoms. In other words it may point to the satanic power that lies behind the kings of the earth, but we don't want to make much of that because it's obvious that most of the students of Hebrew believe that it might be rendered either way. It is however singular.

“I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations, and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down everyone by the sword of another (It's going to be kind of panic when this worldwide destruction comes.) 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 you like a signet ring.”

And I will stop right there in the middle of the verse because I know so many of you don't like the doctrine of election and I will let that drop, the purposes of God. Now, verse 21 is the inclusive plan. “I will shake the heavens and the earth. While this section, verse 22 and verse 23 gives us the details. Now, in the details of the plan there is destructive purpose, and there is constructive purpose. And we'll look first now, at A. in our outline, which is the destructive purposes, verse 22. “I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms, destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; I will overthrow the chariots, and the riders; and the horses and their riders will go down, every one by the sword of another.”

Now, notice this three fold warning, I will overthrow. I will overthrow. I will destroy, and the preceding verse has said, I am going to shake the heavens or I will shake the heavens. Overthrow is a word that is used of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Old Testament. So it's a word that has to do with a tremendous kind of

overthrow just as that of Sodom and Gomorrah. So what is prophesied here is a complete collapse of the political power of the Gentiles, by one whose power is irresistible. “I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms, and I destroy the power of the kingdoms of the Gentiles.”

Now, one might ask at this point, “Is it possible that such a thing will take place?” Is it possible that the thrones of kingdoms, and the power of the kingdoms of the nations will be overthrown by God and there will be such a destruction upon the earth, that actually there will be a kind of internecine warfare among the peoples of the earth?” Well, yes it is possible. We know that there lies within the power of man the power with his own instruments of destruction to destroy himself. Since we have discovered the principles that lie back of atomic fission are able to exercise that kind of power. It is possible for us to destroy ourselves much less God.

Now, of course I don't believe man is going to destroy himself. God is going to do it, but nevertheless it certainly is possible, and furthermore when we have the plain statement of the word of God, we have no doubt then about the possibility of this. But what about the date of it? When is this going to take place? Isn't it strange for the Lord to speak through Haggai to Zerubbabel in 528 B.C. when he was in the midst of things that were effecting his everyday life, and he was thinking about the people and the nations round about him, and the difficulties that they have been having with the Samaritans and the possibilities of difficulties from other nations, isn't it strange for God to speak through the prophet, and then to encase Zerubbabel eyes, and mind to launch out into the distant future when he was going to overthrow the whole of the kingdoms of the earth.

Well, it may sound very strange to us, but remember Zerubbabel didn't understand about the prophetic program that we understand. And so far as he was concerned this was not so much in the indefinite future as it might appear to us now. We look back and my goodness that's twenty four hundred years ago now. But for Zerubbabel he didn't

have the perspective that you and I have, and so when this prophecy was given it was something that was undoubtedly very meaningful for him at that time.

When is this going to take place? Well, now there are several factors about the text that indicate that it is to take place in the indefinite future at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. In Haggai's time in the first place, there was no fulfillment of shaking of the heavens and the earth. You can search the history of the times, and never was there any indication from the history of the times of any event that might be considered the fulfillment of this. So there was nothing in the history of the nation Israel around this time that might have suggested a few years or decades later the fulfillment of this prophecy, and furthermore as we mentioned once previously in the New Testament the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives us a very distinct prophecy that means that this statement of Haggai must be a reference to the Second Advent.

In chapter 12 of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the writer of that great epistle of the high priest, says, in verse 25,

“See to it that you do not refuse him who is speaking. (He is warning his readers to be sure to enter into the blessings that have to do with the Messianic salvation, and so he is warning them.) See to it that you do not refuse him who is speaking for if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on the earth (He's talking about the giving of the law.) Much less shall we escape who turn away from him who warns from heaven, and (now, notice these prophecies.) And his voice shook the earth then, but now he has promised saying, yet once more, I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens. (So he quotes this prophecy from Haggai chapter 2, and then he says,) And this expression yet once more denotes the removing of those things, which can be shaken as of created things. (He says,) The yet once more refers to the time when God is going to do away with these things that can be shaken as of created things in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore since we are receiving a kingdom,

which cannot be shaken let us show gratitude by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe.”

So you see what the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews has done is reminded his reader of the prophecy in Haggai chapter 2 and he has it hasn't been fulfilled yet. It's going to be fulfilled in the future. And it's going to be fulfilled at the time that we receive a kingdom.

Now, we know that from the study of the word of God that we receive the kingdom at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, when he comes to the earth and second time. It's at that time that he establishes his kingdom. And so the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews us that this prophecy in Haggai chapter 2, "I will shake the heavens and the earth." Is a reference to a yet future day from our time? Therefore in the light of this, it is very important that we do not go around saying the Lord is coming next week. It is in the indefinite future that the Lord is coming.

Now, it is a temptation for Bible teachers to tell us when the Lord is coming again. Now, to say to you, if I were to say to you before the meeting tonight or if I were to say to you tonight out of the context of what I have been saying, "Next Wednesday night I am going to tell you when I think the Lord is going to come back." We probably could fill the auditorium and maybe even over in the lounge because there would be enough curious people who would want to know what Dr. Johnson thinks about, not too many I grant you, [laughter] but nevertheless there would be some that would want to know what he sets as a date for the Lord's return. It is only natural that we have that curiosity. Bible teachers have fallen into that trap.

Back in the 30's one of the finest Bible teachers of the 20th century in my opinion feel into the trap of identifying the antichrist with Mussolini. There was a natural identification. Many Bible teachers think that the beast is to be a Roman king, and Mussolini was Roman king, and furthermore he did some other things that reminded him

of the antichrist. He had a mouth speaking great things, and the antichrist has that and Mussolini certainly had a big mouth. [Laughter] And other things led this man to say that in his opinion it seemed that Mussolini was the beast. Well, for the rest of his ministry, and he had a very fine ministry, he rued the day that he ever made that statement.

Now, we have had people say when Jerusalem was taken by the children of Israel, a few years back that since Jerusalem was no longer trodden under foot of the Gentiles that therefore the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus must be soon. We even had one man at the seminary stand on the platform and suggest to us, when we were in session that we would not be able to open the seminary the next fall.

Now, this was a number of years ago, now and he has rued the day that he ever made that because we have reminded him of it down through the years since that time. And then there is a well-known Bible teacher today that is telling us that we will probably not reach 1980. Well, and he may be right. It may be an accident. He may actually hit upon it. If you guess every year from now on you are liable [Laughter] to be right. But the Bible warns us against setting dates. We do not know when the rapture is going to take place. We don't know when the Second Advent is going to take place.

One of the commentators on the book of Haggai, Frank Gibling, a very learned man and a very fine man, has illustrated this by referring to something that anyone who writes a paper for a college or a seminary or university would be acquainted with. He said, “When you are writing a paper, one of the things that you want to be sure and have in your paper, if it's a good paper is a bibliography of the works that you have either cited from or that you have used, and one of the things at a bibliography should have is the author's name, the title of the book, the publisher, the place of publication and the date of publication.”

Now, unfortunately, and this of course is something that disturbs everyone who ever writes a paper. Unfortunately there are many books that have been published without dates, and you can search through them to try to find a clue to the date of

publication and some of them just do not have it, and so scholars have devised a little formula for indication that the book has no date of publication, and what you do is simply put an n.d. No date. Very complicated. Have to be very scholarly to do something like that, but anyway that's what it is. Then he had made the application. He said, “This is something that is attached to all of the prophecies of the word of God, n.d. not dated. These prophecies are prophecies that have to do with the indefinite future, and not only safe principle of interpreting the word of God and the prophetic word is to put a little n.d. by all of them, and avoid the temptation of setting dates.”

Now, I know the temptation is great. After all in 1948, Israel came into existence again after hundreds of years of no Israel a government, a people surely we must be in the last days. It's a temptation to say things like that. We may not be. We might wind up tomorrow, and Israel may be wiped off the face of the map of Asia. That's possible. I don't think it's likely, but nevertheless it's possible. So we have to say not dated about the biblical prophecies.

Now, we know that this is a prophecy that has been valid for hundreds of years. We know that we are twenty four hundred years closer to its consummation. We know that but beyond that we have to let it drop.

Now, let's look at the constructive purpose in verse 23 A. and B. “On that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet ring.”

Now, it is very important in interpreting this prophecy in verse 23 to notice the expression “On that day.” Now, what day is he talking about? Is he talking about the day that Haggai is giving his message to Zerubbabel? No. The context of the preceding verses is the context of the last days, the context of the inauguration of the kingdom upon the earth, the context of the distant future. Now, it's very important that you notice that.

Now, if he had been referring to the day of Zerubbabel. The day that Zerubbabel was receiving the message in 520 B.C. he might have said, “On this day declares the Lord

of hosts, I take you Zerubbabel, my servant. I will make you like a signet ring.” But he said, “On that day.” He looks into the future then he say to Zerubbabel, “On that day, Zerubbabel I will make you like a signet ring.”

Well, Zerubbabel would have said, if he had know that there would be twenty four hundred years, he would say, “I am not going to be living then, how are you going to make me like a signet ring?” He didn’t know that of course at this time, so he didn’t object. He didn’t know how long he was going to live. He didn’t know when this was going to come to pass, but now of course we can see that what he refers to in “On that day,” is the eschatological day that he’s just been talking about. The day of the execution of this plan, when the heavens and the earth are to be shaken.

Now, that brings me to some ideas, that I want to say a word about, and the first one is the most important, and that is the idea of legal representation. Zerubbabel is no longer living, so Zerubbabel is not personally referred to here. He cannot be personally referred to here, because he doesn’t live in this eschatological day, so he cannot be in view ultimately. When God says, “On that day, I will take you Zerubbabel, and I will make you like a signet ring.” He’s not then talking about Zerubbabel personally. Well, what is he talking about? Why he is talking about Zerubbabel as a type of the Messianic king. Zerubbabel is of the Davidic line. He is the governor of Judah. He is the governor of the return remnant. He stands because he is the ruler of Israel and of Judah. He stands as an illustration of the ruler of Judah and Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, so Zerubbabel is a type, and he is spoken of here, in the typical sense. He represents the Davidic line.

Now, two things suggest this, first the word signet and then also the statement “my servant.” Now, the signet ring was the symbol of a person’s authority in the east. Often individuals were not able to sign their name, so they would have a signet ring. Sometimes they carried it around their necks hanging like a piece of jewelry, and other times it would be a ring. And in order to validate certain documents, the signet ring

would be used, and the documents would be stamped. It was like a person's signature. So the signet ring represented the person. The authority of the person stood behind the signet ring, and it was something that was very, very important to him. It was something he carried with him all the time. It represented him. It represented the authority of the person. It represented the power of the person. It represented even the intimacy of the person. The signet.

Now, that's one thing. And here God says that he is going to take Zerubbabel and he will make him like a signet ring. Now, if you will think for a moment, Zerubbabel or no other man can be a person who is representative of the power and authority of the Lord of hosts. Who is the person alone who can have delegated to him the power and authority of the Lord of hosts? Why it can only be the Messiah. Zerubbabel could never fulfill this. He could never be a signet ring for the most high God. He could never be the one who stood in possession of the delegated power of God. So the very fact that he says he's going to make him like a signet ring is a warning to us that more than Zerubbabel is intended by this reference. Incidentally, David in the Old Testament is often used as a type of the Lord Jesus too, because he is the head of that Davidic line. Zerubbabel is one member of the line.

Now, the other thing that I want you to notice, which leads me to believe that this Zerubbabel is looked at typically here, is that he is called “my servant.” Now, you know of course that the term servant is a Messianic term. Let's take a look back. Well, let's don't look far just for the sake of time. Let's look at the book of Zechariah, and this is the same time incidentally, so it would be a very familiar Messianic figure. The servant is a term used of the Messiah in the book of Isaiah particularly. About three times it's used there, but here we have a couple of times in Zechariah. Zechariah chapter 3 and verse 8, we read, “Now, listen Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you indeed they are men who are assembled for behold, I am going to bring in my

servant the branch.” Notice, "my servant the branch", is a reference to the Lord Jesus as the king priest.

Now, turn over to chapter 6 of Zechariah, and here we have a statement, “Then say to him thus says the Lord of hosts, behold a man whose name is branch for he will branch out from where he is and he will build the temple of the Lord.” And there the term branch, which was used previously, is clearly a reference again to the Messiah. So the term “my servant” is a reference to the Messianic figure, and Zerubbabel here is called, “my servant declares the Lord.”

Now, I won't say anything further about this because I think that it's necessary for me to finish. And I want to say just one word about the last part of verse 23. You knew that I wasn't going to pass by without saying anything about “for I have chosen you,” but I am not going to labor the point. This has to do with the principle of the program, and notice, “That he is going to make him like a signet ring, (He adds.) For I have chosen you.” Great as Zerubbabel is, great as this governor of Judah was, it is only by divine election that he is in the line that leads up to the Messianic king the Lord Jesus, and if you should say, “Well, is he not also here speaking about the Lord Jesus ultimately?” Yes, because remember the Lord Jesus as the Messianic king is also so far as his Messianic office is concerned chosen of God. “Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights.” The prophet Isaiah says in Isaiah chapter 42 in verse 1. In other words what we come to here is “For I have chosen you Zerubbabel as a type of the Messianic king who is the chosen mediator between God, and men and who as the Messianic King will accomplish the redemption that is necessarily for men to enter into the kingdom and will himself at the Second Advent, bring that kingdom in.” And so I love the way this prophecy concludes, not because it simply concludes on the doctrine of doctrine. But he in the end of all of the prophecies stresses the fact that the initiating cause of all of the blessing of God is not our merit. It is not our human choice. It is not

even our faith, but it is the elective purpose of God. “For I have chosen you.” And the determines the successful conclusion of his program.

Now, I would like to say just a word in summary of this book. What Haggai has said for us that we should remember these lessons, first the priority of the Lord’s work, build the Lord’s house rather than your own houses, he said in the first message. In the second he said, the presence of the Lord is the antidote to despair. And in the third of his message he said that the presence of sin is a contaminating force, and finally here he says that the kingdom of the Messiah and of the nation Israel shall be accomplished and established in the earth because it all proceeds out of the unconditional Davidic covenant, which God made many years ago with David, concluded in it’s inauguration with the shed blood of the redeemer at Calvary, and now waits to accomplish it’s purposes. So let me close by just reminding you that this prophet is the one who has told us five times, to consider. And may the lessons of the prophet come home to us as we consider these great truths that he has stressed. Let’s bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for this simple and yet profound prophecy. And we thank Thee for the way in which Thou hast, down through the years, encouraged the people of God with promises of Thy presence, with warnings and admonitions to put Thee first, and with warnings against the corrupting influence of human sin. And we thank Thee for the glorious promises of the future. Be with us now as we enter into the next hour of study, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.