

Note: Zerubbabel needed this message because the walls of Jerusalem had not yet been built. Therefore, Zerubbabel was exposed to danger from without. He could be attacked and killed at any time. Thus this was a very timely message for him.

3. Source of the Message (Hag. 2:20,23).

The message came from the Lord.

4. Content of the Message (Hag. 2:21b-23).

The Lord told Zerubbabel that in the future He would "shake the heavens and the earth," i.e., cause physical convulsions in the heaven and earth; "overthrow the throne of kingdoms," i.e., overthrow the Gentile governments of the world and their rulers; "destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen," i.e. destroy the strength of the Gentile nations of the world; and "overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them" and cause "horses and their riders" to "come down" (be killed by opposing armies), i.e., overthrow the military forces of the Gentile nations of the world. At that time, the Lord said He would take Zerubbabel, His servants, and make him like a signet-ring, i.e., He would delegate all His authority to him and he would have a universal reign. The reason the Lord said he would do this is that the Lord had "chosen him" to be the one in whom the promises He had made to David would be fulfilled. This prediction will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ, for that is the time when the Lord will "shake," i.e. cause physical convulsions in the heaven and earth (cf. Matt. 24:29,30) and "overthrow the government and rulers," "destroy the strength," the military forces of all the Gentile kingdoms of the world. But Zerubbabel will not be alive at this time. How then will this prediction be fulfilled? It will be fulfilled in the person of one of his descendants, namely, Jesus, the Messiah (cf. Matt. 1:12 and Luke 3:27). Thus the prediction that the Lord made to Zerubbabel that in the future, i.e., at the second coming of Christ he would be like a signet-ring of the Lord, i.e. he would have all authority given unto him and would have a universal reign - will be fulfilled, but it will be fulfilled, in the person of one of his descendants, namely, Jesus, the Messiah.

Note: The signet-ring was a symbol of authority. It was used to authorize all official documents (cf. Esth. 8:10). This was done by pressing it into the clay tablets on which the documents were written.

Thus the signet ring was an article of great importance and value. In order to guard it against theft or misuse by an unauthorized person, it was usually worn on a chain around the neck, or as a ring on the right hand. (cf. Jer. 22:24).

5. Effect of the Message (Hag. 2:23)

Zerubbabel was encouraged by this message because he knew that since the Lord had chosen him to be His servant who would perpetuate David's seed and David's kingdom, that when the Lord overthrew the Gentile kingdoms that He would maintain and take good care of David's seed and David's kingdom which would mean that his family would be safe. This greatly encouraged him.