

The Book of Haggai

from the book

Minor Prophets: Major Messages

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How To Use This Study Guide

1. A slow, unhurried reading of Haggai is essential. Reading the chapter before looking at the notes, while working with the notes, and after finishing with the notes will give each researcher a powerful sense of the series of meanings within each chapter. It is important to be comfortable with all the names and places in the prophecy and to understand the announcements the prophet makes on behalf of the Lord. When possible, historical information will be included in the notes to increase reading comprehension and enhance application.
2. Our study of each chapter of Haggai will begin with quotes from a work of the Writings called Summary Exposition of the Prophets and Psalms (P&P). This work includes a verse-by-verse overview of both chapters of Haggai that provides general information about the internal sense. Our research will help move us from the generals to the particulars of the internal sense.
3. Another important reference tool is Searle's General Index to Swedenborg's Scripture Quotations. This reference is used to find passages in the Writings where a verse(s) from the Word is either explained specifically or used to illustrate a doctrinal point that we can use in our study. There is also another use of this work. As we study, each researcher will be led by the Lord's Providence in myriad ways, according to specific needs or states. Knowing how to use this book will help each of us to explore relevant topics and look up related passages to increase our knowledge of the three-fold Word.
4. You will soon discover that not every verse, word, name, etc. is directly quoted in the Writings. But there are often other references to the same name, place, or thing in the explanation of a different verse of the Word. The hope is that reflection on these other doctrinal explanations will help us see possible applications to our study of Haggai. We will need to use "derived doctrine" often. Please don't run away from this maligned term. If we use it properly and admit openly that it is derived doctrine, we bring no harm to the internal sense.
5. Keep some kind of notebook handy during your study times. Write out insights, questions, and any summaries you find helpful in organizing your thoughts about each chapter. The goal of this study guide is not to give a detailed summary of the internal sense but to start each researcher's quest for deeper insight.
6. At the end of each chapter in the study guide, you will find a study review. The review includes a summary of each section to help you reinforce and build on your understanding of several of the key points.
7. Begin each study unit with a devotional prayer asking the Lord to guide and direct your thoughts. Certainly beginning in this sphere has the power to inspire and open our minds with a higher spiritual priority that will keep us in the company of the Lord's angels. As the Writings teach, we must seek to love truth for truth's sake. Such an approach will free each reader from

preconceived ideas that might limit his or her ability to "see" the intent and message of the Lord's Word.

Introduction

The book of Haggai is **the second smallest book** of the Old Testament. To grasp its full significance, we require knowledge about the books of Ezra, Jeremiah, Malachi, and Zechariah. All of these prophetic books contain a piece of the puzzle that contributes to the total historical/spiritual picture. This might partially explain why there are only two chapters in Haggai. It is as if the writer assumed the reader knew the sad news of what happened to Jerusalem almost 100 years prior to this prophecy.

Of course, we know that there is a deeper reason why all the books of the prophets were written. Within the stories of natural history, we can find spiritual truth. This spiritual sense must be relevant for eternity, and the angels care about this sense more than they care about names and history. Theirs is a world of spiritual concepts and love of the Lord. For us, history forms an interesting outline from which we begin to see truths emerge that apply to our lives. So here are some historical points to keep in mind while reading the literal sense of Haggai.

1. The Jewish nation for years enjoyed, and benefitted from, the leadership of David and Solomon. Israel's power and influence reached far and wide. The power of David and Solomon's armies put fear and respect in the hearts and minds of neighboring nations. Israel's armies subdued the external nations and enemies, but more potent and deadly enemies lived and grew within their hearts. As their peace and prosperity increased, the quality and sincerity of worship declined in their temple. Their acts of worship became pretentious and empty of sincere love for the Lord. Instead of loving the Lord, they loved treachery, greed, and selfishness; they turned to idolatry and "polluted" the forms of worship. So the Lord spoke through His prophet Jeremiah and told the people they would be brought to their knees. The work of their hearts would be responsible for the coming events in their lives. They would suffer under Babylonian captivity for seventy years:
 - Jeremiah 1:15. "For behold...I will utter My judgments against them concerning all their wickedness, because they have forsaken Me, burned incense to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands."
 - Jeremiah 25:11. "And this whole land shall be a desolation [and] an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."
2. On or about 586 BC, the reign of captivity began with the sacking of Jerusalem. The Babylonians, under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar, spoiled the city and defiled the temple. The burning, sacking, and looting of Jerusalem "ripped out the heart" of the people. The great temple built by

Solomon was burned and destroyed. With disbelief, the children of Israel looked at the ashes and charred timbers of their beloved temple; what was once the marvel and envy of the world was no more. We can identify somewhat with this story if we think about the day we watched, in horror, the destruction and devastation of the World Trade Center. Now imagine how you would feel if such an attack were made on a great, beloved church.

The captors carried away the best, the brightest, the young, and the skillful people from Israel. The elderly and infirm were left behind in a shell of a city that could not function. The "cream of the crop" was distributed throughout Babylon. Families were uprooted and separated from one another. Any integrity of morale and tradition was severely attacked and discouraged.

Their new ruler demanded to be worshiped as a god.

One can only imagine how the captive Jews must have reflected about what had been. Can we imagine them telling those who were born in captivity what it was like in the holy city of Jerusalem? As well as they could, they must have talked about the good old days and the magnificent grandeur and beauty of "their temple."

For seventy years, the Israelites were kept in Babylon and subjected to the philosophy and religion of the Babylonians. Israel's children, listening to the ideals and morals of Babylon, must have been badly confused and unsure of why they should oppose the ways of Babylon. Like "spiritual gentiles," they were vulnerable to falsity, ignorance, and idol worship.

3. Did the Lord forget Israel during those seventy years? History records the defeat of the Babylonian kingdom under the Persians. Cyrus, the king of Persia, was moved providentially to decree that the Israelites should return to their homeland. He ordered their restoration of the temple in Jerusalem and provided some funding for its completion.

Such news brought joy to the repatriated Jews. However, not all of them returned at once; they came over a period of time, journeying in small groups. For all practical purposes, this made their nation weak, an unorganized group of people with no strong leadership.

When they reached Jerusalem, they began work on the temple with enthusiasm and a sense of urgency. Ezra 3:8-10 tells us they "arose as one to oversee these workings on the house of God..." They got the foundation done. Ezra paints a picture of the tears and initial joy for the progress they made.

But then a setback occurred. The Samaritans who resided in the region offered to help them with the rebuilding. Israel turned them down. The rejection did not sit well with the Samaritans so they appealed to Cyrus and his successor Cambyses to stop the work on the temple. What reason did the Samaritans offer? The Jews had a "rebellious nature." In effect, the Samaritans were warning these leaders that Israel would turn against them once the temple was completed and became the center of their lives.

Therefore, a decree came from the Persian nation that all work was to cease. As disappointing as the news was, the Jews complied with the decree. For sixteen years, nothing more was done to the temple. The unfinished

foundation and beams must have served as a grim reminder of their futile efforts to regain a sense of "normalcy" in a world of servitude.

For sixteen years, Israel did no work for the restoration of the temple. Nor did they make any effort to petition for the right to continue restoring the temple. Instead, they turned their attention to their homes, their businesses, and the restoration of financial stability.

To placate their consciences, the children of Israel offered excuses. They complained about the meager crops because of drought conditions. They noted that food and drink were scarce, as were many other necessities of life. Furthermore, their efforts to broaden the base of their financial resources brought in low returns. So they allowed the work on the temple to cease, excusing themselves by saying, "It's not our fault."

4. The Lord called a prophet named Haggai to speak to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest. Haggai would tell these two leaders to rally the people to return and assume the real task at hand, to build spiritual things first. Haggai was called to be a motivator and a conscience to the people. There are basically four themes or prophecies in the book of Haggai:

- Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins? Consider your ways! (Haggai 1:1-15)
- A promise is made that the new temple, when built, will bring a far greater glory than the first temple. (Haggai 2:1-9)
- An analogy of their uncleanness was given to show the Jews what kind of dedication to God would be needed to complete the job. (Haggai 2:10-19)
- The Lord promised that the heathens would some day be overthrown. (Haggai 2:20-23)

5. Who was Haggai? His name means "the festive one." We don't have much information about his personal life. It is generally agreed that Haggai's family was carried off in the great Babylonian sacking of Jerusalem and that Haggai was born in Chaldea, a Babylonian city. Those who lived in this region of south Babylon were called "Chaldeans." The Chaldeans lived in loosely organized tribal groups, "...shifting allegiances...refusing to recognize any loyalty beyond that of the clan..." (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.) The Writings do not speak well of the Chaldeans. They signify worship that contains no truth, or truths profaned in worship. See *Arcana Coelestia* (AC) 1368. *Apocalypse Explained* (AE) 355 [24] points out that Chaldeans signify those who profane worship and destroy the church. Did the Lord choose a Chaldean-born lad to turn things around?

As a young man, Haggai came back to Jerusalem with the returning exiles. What was in him that allowed the Lord to use him in this special way? We have no direct teachings. One can only think that he had a willing heart and a desire to serve the Lord. Loyalty comes out in his call to the children of Israel. Not once does he speak for himself. "Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying...."

It is important to have this information as we turn to the story of the rebuilding of the temple because it helps us compare our own state with that of the Israelites and hear the message given to them as a message given to us. It is important to read this prophecy with expectancy and hope so we will hear the Lord talk about the New Church as the temple that "shall be greater than the former...and in this place I will give peace...."

With prayer and a desire for enlightenment, let's open the book of Haggai and share together the news of the "festive one" regarding the Lord's New Church.

Chapter One

HAGGAI 1:1-4

"In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

'Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: This people says, The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.'

Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 'Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?'

Passages From the Writings

P&P

- "They believe that the Messiah will come to exalt them to glory, and yet the church among them has been devastated..."

Coronis 56

- "From all these passages it may be seen what 'vastation' and 'desolation' are; and that it is not a vastation and desolation of the peoples of a land, and of cities, but of the goods and truths of the church, whence there is nothing but evils and falsities." Of the many passages listed as examples from the Word, Haggai 1:4 and 9 are cited.

Derived Doctrine

"In the second year..."

- Years signify the times and states of the church. Years do not refer to a person's life-span. (AC 515)
- Two or twain (second) signifies some kind of conjunction: conjunction of the will and understanding; conjunction of the external and internal person or church. (AC 5194) Two signifies things that correspond like a pair that complete one another. (AC 747)

"In the second year of King Darius..."

- In the positive sense, a king represents divine truth and divine good, which are in and from the Lord. Good and truth are the principals that are to guide, protect, and save the Lord's people. (AE 446 [16] and AE 721 [12])
- Darius the Mede is likened to Nebuchadnezzar as representing one who required the people to worship him as a god. This worship of self means a ruling from all that is filthy and profane. (AC 1326 [2])

"In the sixth month, on the first day of the month..."

- A month represents the state of truth in a person. [Apocalypse Revealed (AR) 22, 935]
- A month signifies a full or plenary (entire or complete) state. (AR 489)
- Six signifies "all" of truth and good because six is composed of three and two multiplied by each other; three signifies "all" with respect to truth, and two signifies "all" with respect to good. (AR 245)
- Day signifies the successive states of a person's regeneration. (AC 6) In the creation story, the Lord divided the light from the darkness on the first "day." In AC 16, we read "By the prophets...'beginning' involves the first period when man is being regenerated..."

"...the word of the Lord..."

- AC 2 reminds us that the Word is from the Lord and "it must of necessity contain within it such things as belong to heaven, to the church, and to religious belief, and that unless it did so it could not be called the Lord's Word, nor could it be said to have any life in it."
- AC 129 explains that the "true order is for a person to be wise from the Lord, that is, from the Word...Thus [our] starting-point must be the Lord, and not [ourselves]; for the former is life, but the latter is death."

"...the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet..."

- The name "Haggai" is derived from the word for "a festival." Roget's Thesaurus offers the following synonyms for festivity: celebration, merrymaking, gayety, and jollity. In light of the news Haggai brought, celebration would seem to be the synonym worth considering. AE 321 tells us that "...celebration and glorification is a living acknowledgment that the Lord's Human is Divine, and has omnipotence and omniscience..."

"...to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel..."

- The Hebrew meaning of Zerubbabel's name is "seed of Babylon" or "born in Babylon." His family tree in Chronicles 3:17-19 shows that he is descended from David (through Solomon or Nathan).
- In *AR 43*, we read that "...by 'Zerubbabel,' who is to build the house, thus the church, the Lord is represented...that in that church there will also be truths from a celestial origin."
- Shealtiel, a descendent of David and a son of King Jeconiah, was Zerubbabel's father. The name "Shealtiel" means either "God is a shield" or "God is victor."
- The words "son of..." denote truths that are derived from good, thus one origin. (*AC 5515*)
- As the governor of "Judah," Zerubbabel in the supreme sense signifies the Lord as to celestial love; in the spiritual sense, the celestial kingdom of the Lord and the Word; and in the natural sense the doctrine of the celestial church from the Word. (*AR 350*)
- Governors "signify generals...in which and under which are particulars..." (*AC 5290*) Before we lose this concept of "generals" and "particulars," let's read a quote from *AC 848 [3]* that explains how important they are in "building or rebuilding" ideas. "It is with regeneration exactly as with man's birth as an infant. His life is then very obscure; he knows almost nothing, and therefore at first receives only general impressions of things, which by degrees become more distinct as particular ideas are inserted in them, and in these again still more minute particulars. Thus are generals illustrated by particulars...so it is with every one who emerges out of spiritual temptation...."

"...and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest..."

- This Joshua is not to be confused with the Joshua who succeeded Moses and led the children of Israel into the Promised Land. The Joshua of our study, like his father and grandfather, was a high priest. His priestly role is mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah. (In these two Minor Prophets, he is called "Jeshua.")
- In the original Hebrew form, the name "Joshua" means "Yahweh is salvation," "Yahweh saves," or "Yahweh will save." The name "Jesus" grew out of the name Joshua.
- Priests represent the Lord as to His divine good. (*AR 854*) Priests are to teach truth and lead people to the good of life and so to the Lord. (*AC 10794*) The priesthood represents the Lord as to the work of salvation. (*AC 9809*)
- Only the high priest could enter into the Holy of Holies. Refer to the following numbers to read more about priestly duties and the representations of their grooming and clerical garb: *AC 6148 [7], 9477, 9807, and 9809.*

"[The word of the Lord, through the prophet Haggai came to]...the high priest, saying 'Thus speaks the Lord of hosts'..."

- The "Lord of hosts" signifies the Lord as to **all** good and truths fighting against falsities and evils. *(AE 453 [6])*
- "Jehovah of hosts" signifies the church in its whole complex, by which the Lord removes the hells in general and with each person individually. *(AE 734 [8])*
- When we read that "Jehovah said," it signifies that the Lord from the Divine Celestial through the *Divine Spiritual perceives (thinks) and acts because "saying" involves both.* *(AC 2619)*
- Thus we can see that the Lord's (saying) announcement is full and complete. All of His Goods and Truths will be brought to Use to remove the influence of Hell, and His perception and acts will be for the birth of the New Church and the salvation of His people.

"This people says..."

- Is the word "say" repeated so that we might see a contrast? The Lord's saying will be different than the people's saying. The Lord's "saying" comes from an Infinite and Eternal perspective, and the people's "saying" comes from the finite and temporal perspective. Keeping this in mind will be important for what comes next in Haggai's prophecy.

"[The people say] the time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built."

- "You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times." *(Matthew 16:3)*
- "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." *(Mark 1:15)*
- "Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is." *(Mark 13:33)*
- The Lord told His disciples to beware of those who predict when and where He was to be found. *(Matthew 24:23 and Mark 13:21)*
- **The point:** The Lord, and not the people, knows the time for the building or rebuilding of His house.
- *AC 710* tells us that "the house of the Lord" signifies the church in which love is primary within the celestial and spiritual church.
- The house of God in the internal sense signifies the church. In the more universal sense, it represents heaven. In the most universal sense, it represents the whole kingdom of the Lord. But in the supreme sense, it signifies the Lord Himself as to the Divine Human. *(AC 3720)*

"Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying..."

- Reading this phrase is almost like hitting the "refresh" button on the computer. This phrase is repeated to remind us who is revealing these truths. This phrase, the "refresh" button, brings on line the latest, freshest, news from the Lord. These are not the words of some human named Haggai. These are the deeper thoughts of the Lord as He thinks and acts from the great resources of His Love and Wisdom. But coming through Haggai, the festival one, these words tell all in heaven and on earth the happy and necessary news of the power and salvation that is to come through the Lord's Divine Human.

"Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?"

- In the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV) of the Bible and the *New English Bible* (NEB), the word "ceiling" is used place of "paneled." The Writings tell us the meaning of "ceiling" but not "paneled." *AC 3391 [3]* says "...ceiling with cedar...denotes falsifying intellectual and spiritual truths."
- The use of "you" and "yourselves" emphasizes the fallacy of human prudence caring first for itself while ignoring spiritual issues.
- "Is it time" is the wonderful way the Lord gets us to reflect on our spiritual state. He knows the answer to that question. We lack perception and need to reflect so an answer can come to us "as-of-self."
- *AC 3720* gives us many meanings of the word "temple": the Lord's spiritual church, the spiritual kingdom, and (in the highest sense) His Divine Truth.
- The word "ruin" has many synonyms: stricken, stumble, crash, fallen, wasted, desolate, failure, dilapidated, wreck, impoverished, relic, and impure. Which of these words fit the internal sense? *P&P* introduces yet another word: devastated. "...the church among them has been devastated." How did that happen? The people of the church believed the "Messiah" would "exalt them to glory."

Putting It All Together

1. We must begin our summary with the statement found in *P&P*: "the church among them was devastated." How did that happen? After the many years of captivity, the minds of the people were longing for a "Messiah" who would restore their "world-power" status among the nations. In their minds, it was "pay-back" time, and they "believed the Messiah would come to exalt them to glory."
2. Such thinking made them lose their sense of "timing." The Lord wanted to move them from generals to particulars. He wanted them to return to the things of the Word. Patience, based on truth, needed to come among the

- people. As Isaiah 28:10 put it: "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little."
3. The people were not with the Lord at this time. It amounted to "the Lord says" versus "the people say." The call to the governor and the high priest is of spiritual significance. The Lord's deepest caring for the salvation of His people is represented by these offices. From His Celestial Love and Wisdom, the way is opened for everyone to emerge from the bondage of spiritual temptations.
 4. But the Divine question has to reach and touch hearts. "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" It may appear that other things in life have to be addressed first. The time is right! The time is now! Look within and see where you falsified the intellectual and spiritual things of the church. Worship of the Lord is not a "me" thing. It is giving the Lord the best we have within us. Rebuilding and making the house of the Lord the center and power of our lives must be the first priority within the hearts and minds of the Lord's children.
 5. Isn't it interesting to note that the prophet comes to the governor and high priest first? The governor represents the Lord as to celestial love and the spiritual sense of the Word. The high priest is meant to do the work of salvation by leading people to the good of life and the Lord. Joshua's name means "Yahweh saves" or "Yahweh is salvation."
 6. Best of all, Haggai, whose name is "festive," gets to carry the celebratory news to the disillusioned and lethargic ex-captives. Haggai shares the news that the Messiah is coming. He is coming to restore order. His Divine Human will fight and overcome the hells, and He will help rebuild the "house of the Lord."

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 1:1-4

Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. The first verse gives us a historical date to fix on: the second year of Darius, in the sixth month, the first day.... The Writings open up our thinking by telling us these dates do not refer to any man's life span. Instead, all dates and times refer to spiritual states and needs. When angels read names and dates, they do not "see" names or dates. They are aware of the spiritual significance of each thing. Look back and see what states the angels might see when they read these dates. What states did you see?
2. Falling out of "timing" with the Lord seems to be a human problem. We say. The Lord says. We feel the Lord's way is slow. We feel the Lord is a hard taskmaster. The Lord says His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Do we generally feel that is the case? Can we identify with the wish to delay taking

- on certain spiritual responsibilities? What makes us feel this way? How do we get out of step with the Lord?
3. What thoughts crossed your mind on the "paneled house" observation? From your perspective, is the house of the Lord inside you in a state of ruin? Is your earthly house more comfortable than your spiritual house? Why?
 4. "The Lord says...." What kind of things do you hear the Lord saying? Are other voices (concerns) overriding His voice? What helps you to hear Him?
 5. Generals to particulars: what a wonderful way to remind ourselves that the Lord wants steady progress. He isn't interested in quantum leaps. Precept by precept, line upon line, here a little there a little. Think about the process of regeneration. What precepts or lines do you take on one at a time? How do we keep the (particular) larger goal in view as we take each small (general) step?

HAGGAI 1:5-6

"Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways! You have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but do not have enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes."

Passages from the Writings

P&P

- "They could no longer be taught by the Word."

Derived Doctrine

"Now therefore..."

- This phrase seems to say, "In spite of what you have been thinking, here are the facts as the Lord sees them."

"...thus says the Lord of hosts..."

- Please review the teachings about "saying" and "the Lord of Hosts" given in the previous section. (*AE 453 [6] and AE 734 [8]*)

"Consider your ways..."

- The word "consider" commands the Jews to rethink, or reflect on, their ways. What were they to rethink? In *AC 10566*, there is a long list of the mistakes Israel made over the years:

- They thought they were the only people with whom the Divine was present, that they were the "nation of Jehovah."
- They thought nothing of the church.
- They thought only of possessions and eminence over others.
- They believed in God because they saw great miracles wrought by Him.
- They turned aside to worship many gods.

"You have sown much, and bring in little..."

- To understand this verse, we need to consider the word "appearances." It appeared that they sowed "the good of charity and the truth of faith." (AC 6154) The results indicate that few real seeds must have been planted. Little is brought in. That is contrary to the Lord's teachings that good ground would yield some hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty. (Matthew 13:8)

"You eat, but do not have enough..."

- AC 2343 teaches that eating signifies to communicate, be conjoined, and to appropriate. From this teaching, we get the picture that Israel went through the motions of "eating" without really taking much in. The words "do not have enough" seem to say they "ate crumbs" instead of the meal; another image is "standing in the midst of plenty starving." The lack of genuine communication with the Lord limited their spiritual sustenance and nourishment balance.

"You drink, but you are not filled with drink..."

- To drink wine signifies having a desire "to investigate the things which are of faith..." (AC 1071)
- AC 3089 describes drinking water as a desire to make "inquiry whether anything of truth ...could be conjoined" or appropriated into one's life.
- It appears from the literal sense that desire, investigation, and appropriation were missing from their spiritual lives. The people felt this lack, a sense of thirst not being quenched from the "living waters." The Lord said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give ...will never thirst.... [My water] will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14)

"You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm..."

- AC 9003 teaches us that clothing signifies "memory-knowledges" that support our external life.
- AE 240 [12] contrasts "clothed" with "naked." To be "naked" signifies "those... who are not in truths and thence not in good, being ignorant of truths and yet

longing for them. This is the case with those within the church when those who teach are in falsities...and with those outside the church who do not have the Word and consequently do not know truths and thence know nothing about the Lord."

- Our text seems to represent people somewhat between the clothed and the naked state. Such people know little things of faith but do not find them warm or comforting. They appear to be cold and useless facts with no extension or application.

"And he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes."

- *AC 8002 [4 & 5]* tells us "...those who labored for hire, by them in the internal sense are meant those who do what is good for the sake of their own advantage in the world; and in a sense...for the sake of reward in the other life; thus who desire to merit by works.... Such cannot possibly be consociated with angels....The end is what determines the actions, and gives them their quality."
- Bags signify the exterior natural. (*AC 5649*) If that definition doesn't help, check this one out: *AC 5657* says bags represent truths given "gratuitously." The recipient feels doubtful of the worth of those truths, even though they are intended to provide confirmation.
- My question is this: Could these doubts about gratuitous truths given to the exterior natural be the holes in the bag that loses the wages?

Putting It All Together

1. P&P teaches: "They could no longer be taught by the Word." How sad is that?
2. The Lord tells them to consider their ways and fix the problem. The "many seeds" of their tradition were in reality a pretense that served little use. The repetitions of traditional chants, songs, and prayers were not the kind of "food" that brought genuine communication and conjunction with the Lord. They were not drinking deeply from the living waters of truth within the Word. The truths that should have clothed their minds and protected their externals were meager and inadequate: "No one is warm." The merit or recognition they sought was fleeting, a lost cause. "Consider your ways" is a call for Israel to begin anew. The Lord must be first in all things. Israel must receive the truths that are freely given every day and use them to confirm truth in the exterior natural. The Lord asks them to allow their lives and daily commitments to the Lord to become the end that determines "the actions, and gives them their quality." (*AC 8002 [5]*)

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 1:5-6.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. When the Lord advises us to "consider your ways," do we do so with a sense of agreement or a sense of resistance? Hell certainly has a field day with the Lord's request. It tries to get us to put off any form of reflection. The hells tell us, "Why open this or that problem? Why dwell on negative things? If you want to open unpleasant things and dwell on the negative, try looking into a sewer system. Let bygones be bygones. Live for the moment!" "Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero." Seize the moment; Enjoy today, trust little to tomorrow. What do you think about this philosophy of life? What makes it hellish?
2. The correspondential Derived Doctrine section seems fairly straight-forward: sowing seed; drinking; clothing; and wages. What applications to life can you see for these correspondences?
3. AC 8002 has that wonderful line: "The end is what determines the actions, and gives them their qualities." How is this different from the statement of the world that says "the end justifies the means"?
4. Why would the hells want to prevent us from considering our ways? Could it be that if we consider our ways, the hells might have to go away? Certainly if we shun evils as sins, their "comfortableness in secret places" is jeopardized. Anything we take on from the Lord, such as love, stirs (agitates) them up greatly. Do you remember one of the definitions of temptation? "All temptation is an assault upon the love in which the man [person] is, and the temptation is in the same degree as is the love. If the love is not assaulted, there is no temptation." (AC 1690 [3]) In conclusion, we are taught the greater and purer our love is for the Lord, the greater is the assault against those loves from hell. Are we ready and willing to face such assaults? How can we face and conquer them?
5. Looking ahead, we will be faced with Haggai's push to rebuild the Temple of the Lord. Are you thinking ahead as to what this represents for us today and for those coming after us? What do you think the temple represents?

HAGGAI 1:7-9

Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways! "Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the Lord. "You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the Lord of hosts. "Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house.

Passages From the Writings

P&P

- "The church cannot be instituted among them, because every one looks to himself and not to the Lord..."

AC 1488 [2]

- "In Haggai...‘houses’ denote memory-knowledges by which, through reasonings, come falsities." Haggai 1:8-10 is cited.

AC 3579[2]

- Haggai 1:9-10 are mentioned in *AC 3579 [2]*, but the number explains the correspondential meaning of verse 10, so we will come back to this number in the next section.

AE 573 [7]

- "From this it can be seen that the truths and goods of heaven and the church are meant in the Word by ‘hosts;’ which makes clear why it is that Jehovah is called in the Word ‘Jehovah Zebaoth.’ And ‘Jehovah God Zebaoth,’ that is, ‘of hosts’ as in" Haggai 1:9 and 14 are cited.

Derived Doctrine

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: consider your ways!"

- Remember that when we read "Thus says the Lord", it means that the Lord is speaking from His totality. His Divine Love and Divine Wisdom have looked, assessed, and determined that this is the quality of the issue and this is the way goods and truths will fight against falsity and evil. (*AE 453*) This is the whole complex by which the Lord removes the hells. (*AE 734 [8]*)
- To "consider your ways" is the work of spiritual reflection and repentance.

"Go up into the mountains and bring wood and build the temple..."

- To ascend or go up signifies to make advancements from memory-knowledges to celestial light. (*AC 1541*)
- When said of human beings, ascending or going up signifies to go from a lower to a higher internal state. (*AC 811 [21]* and *AE 1057 [5]*)

"...bring wood..."

- Simply stated to bring wood represents the good that is in works of charity, and in justice. (AC 2784)

"...build the temple..."

- To build signifies to raise up or vivify (enliven, quicken, give life) what has fallen. (AC 151)
- To build signifies to form doctrinal things. (AC 1187, 1304)
- To build signifies that those who had receded from the truths and goods of the church will now return and help raise them up again. (AE 355 [9])
- To build signifies to restore the church by leading into the good of love and teaching the truths of doctrine. (AE 391 [17])
- A temple may signify to be or to become intelligent from divine truth and to realize a heavenly joy from such intelligence. (AE 630 [11])
- A temple signifies that in the New Jerusalem, external worship will not be separate from internal worship. (AE 918)
- A temple signifies that the Divine Human of the Lord, or truth itself, cannot be destroyed, for when it seems to be so, it rises again, glorified. (AC 7847 [4], AC 10406 [4], and AE 220)

"...that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified..."

- Let's read this lesson from AC 997 regarding pleasure, delight, and uses: "...a life of charity is a life of uses. Such is the life of the whole heaven; for the kingdom of the Lord, because it is a kingdom of mutual love, is a kingdom of uses. Every pleasure therefore which is from charity, has its delight from use. The more noble the use, the greater the delight... and so it is with every pleasure – the more noble its use, the greater its delight."
- Regarding the Lord, His Noble Uses are the source of the greatest pleasure and the greatest delight. They surely glorify His Holy Name. And how can we glorify Him? With the surrender of our hearts to His Noble uses.

"You looked for much, but it indeed came to little..."

- The loftiness of a person signifies having a desire to pursue or develop one's "own" intelligence. (AE 445) Is the Lord sharing with us that "looking for much" represents wanting to have a lofty self-intelligence? If so, the answer seems clear. It will "come to little."

"And when you brought it home..."

- *AC 3809* describes "bring to his house" as signifying conjunction. If a person seeks a lofty self-intelligence, he seeks to welcome it into his home and looks for ways to conjoin it to his "home."

"I blew it away..."

- Let's consider what the "it" is in this prophecy. Can we assume that the "it" refers to self-intelligence, the artificialities and hatching of ideas from the unenlightened mind?
- Couple this idea with this quote from *AE 419 [22]*: "...in the spiritual world, as in the natural world, strong winds and tempests spring up.... It has at different times been granted me to perceive these tempests and also the east wind by which the evil were dispersed and cast into the hells, when the Last Judgment was in progress." In other words, "winds" signify the dispersion of falsities and evils.

"Why?"

- The Writings have a wonderful series of passages about why the Lord asks, inquires, or interrogates people on certain issues when He already knows the answer. See *AC 226, 1931, 5800, and 6132* for illustrations. Here is a short answer drawn from *AC 226*: "...the reason for asking is that man may acknowledge and confess." The Lord seeks to lead us to the end, cause, and effect of things. His questions show us internal disorders that lie hidden in secret places. The questions are intended to help us discover things when our state is ready to acknowledge and confess our mistakes.

"Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house."

- The Lord's house is in ruins. What does this represent in the spiritual sense?
- A house signifies accumulated memory-knowledges. (*AC 1488*)
- A house signifies scientifics (facts, data, memory-knowledges) that are collected together. To collect scientifics is to raise and build up the external person. (*AC 1488*)
- The house of the Lord signifies the church, heaven, and more universally the Lord Himself as to the Divine Human. (*AC 3720*)
- Contrast the above with what would be in a human being's "house."
- Running to our own house illustrates that we are comfortable with our ways and not as familiar with the Lord's ways. How quickly do we use human prudence without considering the ways of the Lord? Is it a surprise to hear that the Lord's house is in ruins while our "house" is cared for more often?

Putting It All Together

1. P&P announces that a church cannot be instituted among people who look to themselves and not to the Lord. For those who rely on memory-knowledges, or scientifics, there is but one end: reasoning that gives rise to falsities. The human mind void of the Lord's good and truth becomes inventive. It hatches ideas that are inconsistent with eternal truths. These artificial ideas tear away at the base of the Lord's house (within the individual) and leave it in a state of ruin.
2. "Consider your ways" is a call to reflection. It is an invitation to come aboard and participate in what is going to happen spiritually. The Lord is going to blow away the world of falsity and illusion. We need to gather "wood." The Temple of the Lord is going to be built with Love, Charity, and Justice. The house of the Lord (His Temple) will once again offer the kind of worship that will help His people see Him in the Divine Human.
3. Do you remember the history of the five Churches? The Most Ancient Church worshipped the Lord as the Divine Human. The Ancient Church worshipped Him as the Divine Human Representative. The Jewish Church worshipped Him as the Invisible One and feared to speak His Name. The Christian Church worshipped Him as the Son of Man and Son of God. But the announcement to the New Church carried the good news that we could once again worship the invisible as visible. The Divine Human would come among us—the Nunc Licet—so that we might enter into the mysteries of faith with understanding. This would be The New Jerusalem, the crown of all churches, whose kingdom shall be forever and ever.
But within this prophecy is a warning. If we care more for our houses than the Lord's house, we will miss out on the rebirth and restoration of spiritual order. Human prudence will be blown away, "says the Lord of hosts."

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 1:7-9.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. Compare the passages from the Writings and the Word with the doctrine we derived from them. Do you feel this section followed that direct teachings of the Writings? Can you think of other teachings that would contribute to our discussion here?
2. How difficult is it to keep the house of the Lord in better shape than our own? Why?

3. Have you ever "hatched" artificial ideas to fit into the things of the Word? What are some ways that such artificialities manifest themselves in the world and the church?
4. Think about the Lord blowing "it" away. Smog often results from pollutants hanging over a city. What chases that stagnation away? A "breath of fresh air." So it is with the Lord and truth. We need His help in clearing away the smog of the mind. How does He clear the air? How can we help?
5. The invisible becoming visible: that is a promise of revelation. It will come, but it will come as each individual opens his or her heart and mind to the Second Coming. Don't we long for it to happen at a faster pace? Could it be that the Lord still has to get many more people to consider their ways and that He has to ask more questions among His people?

HAGGAI 1:10-11

"Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands."

Passages From the Writings

P&P

- "...therefore no truth or good can be received by them."

AC 3579 [2]

- "...that 'dew' signifies truth...and speaking of a new church, where the 'vine giving its fruit' denotes the spiritual of the church or the truth of faith, giving good; and the 'earth giving its produce,' the celestial of the church or the good of charity, giving truth; these are the 'dew which the heavens shall give.'" "In Haggai 1:9, 10...where the 'dew of the heavens and the produce of the earth,' which were restrained, have a like signification."

AC 3580 [2]

- "...'wine' is what is spiritual, thus truth from good.... That 'corn and new wine' have this signification, may be seen...In Haggai 1:10, 11... where 'drought' denotes a lack of dew and of rain, thus a lack of truth derived from any good; 'a drought upon the corn' is a lack of good; and 'drought upon the new wine' is a lack of truth."

Derived Doctrine

Remember, the doctrines tell us that the heavens withholding dew and the earth withholding fruit represent the loss of good and truth. It is not the Lord withholding these things. It is the heart and mind of the individual who "cuts" it off. The person is the one with a cold heart and a state barren of the produce the soul needs each moment.

"...year of drought"

- A drought "signifies a state of loss and deprivation of truth." (AE 481 [2])
- Drought signifies the "absence of good and truth." (AC 1949)
- Drought denotes truths wherein there is nothing of life. (AC 8869)
- A drought signifies "sounding words without any spirit in them. (AC 10406 [7])
- A drought signifies "deprivation of truth." (AE 355 [16])
- A drought signifies a church "where there is no good." (AE 504 [27])
- A drought represents a state without perception of good. (AE 537 [14])
- A year in the internal sense does not refer to 365 days. To the angels, who are in the internal sense of the Word, a year signifies what is full in respect to the states of the church and what is eternal. (AC 2906)

"I called for a drought on the land and on the mountains..."

- AC 2571 shares these representations of the word "land":
 - The internal man of the church.
 - The region where the church is.
 - The church itself.
 - In the universal sense, the Lord's kingdom in heaven and on earth.
 - The doctrine of love and charity where the faith of the church resides.
- "On the mountains" signifies where the good of celestial love prevails. (AC 10438)
- A mountain signifies the church where love to the Lord and worship prevails. (AE 734 [2])
- There are so many more references we could cite. A mountain provided the setting for the reception of the Decalogue. Therefore, it could represent the laws of the Lord setting life in order. A mountain provided the children of Israel with moments of respite when they traveled through the desert. Therefore, a mountain represented moments of peace and tranquility prior to a return to the valley to face the arduous task of regeneration.

"... [a drought] on the grain and the new wine and the oil..."

- Let's note the trine here: grain, wine, and oil.

- The Writings translate the words "drought upon the grain" to "a drought upon corn," which represents a lack of good.
- The drought upon the new wine represents a lack of truth.
- A drought on the oil means a lack of the good of love to the Lord from the Lord. See *AC 10261* or *AE 375 [24 -26]*.

"... [a drought] on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and on livestock, and on all the labor of your hands."

- In the positive sense, "To bring forth" signifies the restoration and reformation of the church. "...to bring forth' signifies to make them fruitful and bring them forth in act, which is to live according to them, and thus be reformed..." (*AE 721 [10, 18]*) When the drought is introduced, it means the opposite happened.
- Man, in the positive sense, represents or signifies the wisdom and intelligence necessary to fight against falsity. (*AC 49*)
- Livestock (cattle) "...in the original tongue is from a word which also means 'acquisition,' and 'acquisition' in the spiritual sense is also truth from which is good, for the reason that good is acquired by means of truth." (*AC 6049*)
- Livestock signifies the good of truth. (*AC 6016*)
- Livestock signifies the forms of good and truth. (*AC 6009*)
- The labor of one's hands or the fruit of one's hands represents pursuit of life according to the Lord's commandments. (*AE 340 [13]*)
- Hands signify power, and what is in a person's power is at his or her disposal. (*AC 5296*)
- The works of a person's hands signify the things proper to them, which are evil and false. The works of the Lord's hands signify the things that are proper to Him, which are goods and truths. (*AR 457*)

Putting It All Together

1. When anyone looks to themselves and not the Lord, "no truth can be received by them." (P&P) When a person looks to him- or herself for good and truth, the heavens dry up. There is no morning dew to refresh the ground. When anyone looks to memory-knowledges or the natural lumen, the mind (earth) can bear no spiritual fruit. A spiritual drought touches the land, the mountains, the grain, the wine, and the oil. When a person looks to the strength of his or her hands, that person's labor is for the moment and not eternity.
2. Sad to say, a life apart from the Lord takes away the livestock—acquisitions—for which we are to care. Livestock correspond to every essential of life that forms good and truth. Such things are essential for our souls. Our spiritual livestock must feed, cloth, and nurture the rational mind and spiritual life.
3. Into such conditions Haggai was called. He had to call on the governor and the high priest to lead the way. He had to repeat over and over, "Consider

your ways." Haggai had to call attention to the inappropriate priorities. He spoke of true priorities, telling the people that the Lord had to be first and their comforts second.

Will the people listen? Will they quit making excuses and blaming others for their indifference and neglect of the Lord?

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 1:10-11.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. What method do you use to keep spiritual priorities on top of your life's "to do" list?
2. Dew has an interesting correspondence. It plays a part in the manna story. It plays a part in Gideon's story. How can this "dew" reach your practical every day experiences?
3. The correspondences of draught remind us of all kinds of dryness. By itself, doctrine, or study of the Word, can seem dry to us. How can we "wet" these things so the Lord can use them to give us living water? How we let studying the Word bring rain back to the land and the mountains?
4. Livestock represent every essential of life. Thinking of animals as an essential of life is not my usual mode of thinking. How about you? On the other hand, can we still care for the essentials of life without thinking about the correspondence of livestock? How do we move from understanding a correspondence to understanding its application to life?
5. Does Haggai, as a prophet, sound and feel gentler in his prophecy than Amos or Nahum? Why or why not? What might account for the difference?

HAGGAI 1:12-15

"Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him; and the people feared the presence of the Lord.

Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, spoke the Lord's message to the people, saying, 'I am with you, says the Lord.'

So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius."

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "The church will be instituted among those who are wise from the Word."

AC 573 [7-8]

- "...the truths and goods of heaven and the church are meant in the Word by 'hosts;' which makes clear why it is that Jehovah is called in the Word 'Jehovah Zebaoth,' and 'Jehovah God Zebaoth,' that is, 'of hosts' (as in...Haggai 1:9, 14...). From this it is now evident that 'hosts' signify the truths and goods of heaven and the church in the whole complex; and as most things in the Word have also a contrary sense, so do 'hosts' and in that sense they signify falsities and evils in their whole complex..."

Doctrine of the Lord 47

- "There are in man two fountains of life, one is the motion of the heart, and the other is the respiration of the lungs. The life from the respiration of the lungs is what is properly meant by 'spirit' and also by 'soul.' That this acts as one with the man's thought from the understanding, and that the life from the heart's motion acts as one with his will's love, will be seen...."

Doctrine of the Lord 48, ii

- "As man's life varies according to his state, by 'spirit' is meant the varying affection of life in man. As...The excitation of life..." Haggai 1:14 is cited as one of the examples.

Derived Doctrine

Zerubbabel

- *AR 43* helps us focus on the derived doctrine we will need to use for the closing verses of chapter one. "...by 'Zerubbabel' who is to build the house, thus the church, the Lord is represented..."
- In *AR 350*, we are taught that Zerubbabel as a governor represents the Lord as to His celestial love; the celestial kingdom of the Lord and the Word; and in the natural sense, the celestial church from the Word.

Joshua

- Joshua, the high priest, represents the Lord as to the work of salvation. (*AC 9809*)

"...with all the remnant of the people..."

- A "remnant" signifies those within the church who are in good. (AC 3322 [4])
- "The remnant of the people" signifies truths stored up by the Lord in the interior person. (AC 5113 [8])
- "Remnants" signify the truths and goods stored up in a person by the Lord from infancy. (AE 724 [29])

"...obeyed the voice of the Lord their God..."

- Listening, or harkening, denotes "obedience from affection." (AC 3684)
- When the spiritual man disposes all things in the natural man, the natural man ought to obey as a servant of his Lord. (AC 3167)
- "...the voice of the Lord" in the Word signifies the Word itself, the doctrine of faith, and also the conscience. (AC 219)
- "Voice" signifies what is enunciated from the Word, thus the precepts of the Lord. (AC 8360)

"And the people feared the presence of the Lord."

- Fear has many meanings. Let's look first at what is called "holy fear." Holy fear has within it a longing (love) for the Divine. With that longing is a desire not to do anything that would offend the love for the Lord. (AC 3718)
- Fearing; being not afraid "signifies resuscitation, and then adoration from the deepest humiliation". Holy fear sometimes is accompanied with a sacred tremor of the mind's interiors as there is a sense of the Lord's entrance to replace one's (proprium) own life. (AR 56)

"I am with you, says the Lord."

- Do we really need to cite doctrinal sources for this sentence? The Lord is Omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient: all present, all powerful, and all knowing. The Lord saying, "I am with you" is of great value when any rebuilding of the temple is undertaken.

"So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel ... and the spirit of Joshua...and the spirit of the remnant of the people..."

- Look again at the passage from *Doctrine of the Lord* 48. The "spirit of excitation" is involved in this portion of the text. A sense of newness, a sense of restoration entered into the hearts and minds of the people mentioned in the prophecy.

"...they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God."

- We can rework this sentence with the help of AC 573 [8]. They came and worked on "the truths and goods of heaven and the church in the whole complex." The people came to understand the meaning of dedication, commitment, and endeavor.

Putting It All Together

1. "The church will be instituted among those who are wise from the Word." (P&P)
2. Obeying, harkening to the Word of the Lord, brings about powerful results. The spirit of excitation fills us. A sense of possibility replaces defeatism. How many times have we felt the voice of negativity dampen our spirit of enthusiasm? In this story, the Lord's leadership of governors and priests brings action. Holy fear, a sense of humility and love, causes the soul to tremble with anticipation as the "old ways" are removed and replaced by the "new ways." The coming of the New Church whisks in with a breath of fresh air to clear away the smog of falsity.

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams." (*I Samuel 15:22*)

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 1:12-15.

Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. This section strikes a strongly positive note. Could you feel a sense of the building of "excitation of the spirit"? Look for examples in the passage.
2. By now, you have had plenty of practice at thinking from correspondences. Are you seeing what is behind the literal sense? Are you also applying what you see to current life issues?
3. Listening and obeying require a certain inner discipline. There's a song that says, "you only hear as well as you listen." The rebellious part of us is quick to use "yes, but" arguments to avoid some responsibilities. Yes, the Lord will rebuild, but in light of (some example is given)...it probably will not happen. How many "yes, buts" have you heard or used? What is dangerous about them?
4. The Lord's New Church is growing. Every day, we move closer to its fulfillment. What would you pick as your best contribution to this spiritual cause? How can you make that contribution each day?

5. In your marriage, in your relationship with family and friends, how do you see "holy fear" as an asset?

Chapter Two

HAGGAI 2:1-3

"In the seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying: 'Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying; Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing?' "

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "The church when first instituted was full of truths; at the present day it is devastated."

Derived Doctrine

"In the seventh month..."

- A month signifies the end of a preceding and the beginning of a subsequent state, thus a new state. (AC 3814)
- A month refers to the state of truth in man. (AR 22 and 935)
- A month signifies a full or plenary state. (AR 489)
- A month signifies a state of life as to truth. (AR 925)
- Seven in general signifies the Lord's advent into the world, and also His advent into His glory; and every advent of His in particular. (AC 728)
- Seven occurs in the Word when anything holy is treated of, and, in the opposite sense, anything profane. (AR 10)
- Seven signifies the Lord, and representatively, celestial love. (AC 5265)

"...on the twenty-first of the month..."

- The "twenty-first" signifies a holy state and its end. Twenty-one comes when we multiply three times seven. (AC 7842, 7903)

"Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel..."

- This phrase is mentioned, or repeated, six times: Haggai 1:1, Haggai 1:12 (title of "governor of Judah" is not mentioned), Haggai 1:14 (title of "governor of Judah" is mentioned), Haggai 2:2, Haggai 2:21, and Haggai 2:23 (title of "governor of Judah" is not mentioned and "my servant" is used).

"Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest..."

- This phrase is repeated five times: Haggai 1:1, Haggai 1:12, Haggai 1:14, Haggai 2:2, and Haggai 2:4.

"...remnant of the people...."

- This phrase occurs three times: Haggai 1:12, Haggai 1:14, and Haggai 2:2.

Why should we note these repetitions? We have no doctrinal explanation why "the sons of," "governor of Judah," "high priest," and "remnant of the people" are repeated so often in Haggai. Yet, there they are. I think we ought to contemplate reasons for the repetition, keeping our minds open and ready for influx from the Lord.

"Who is left among you who saw this temple [Lord's house] in its former glory?"

- The Divine inquisition, the Lord's gentle probing of their hearts and minds, had a purpose. The question He asked them directed them to reflect on the "former glory" and beauty of the representatives of the Divine Human as seen in the temple built under Solomon's leadership. Where did Solomon get his architectural inspiration? The Lord or his own creativity?
- *AC 7847 [4]* has this interesting teaching regarding the signification of temple: "...in the supreme sense by 'temple' is meant the Lord as to the Divine Human... therefore in the representative sense by a 'temple' is meant His church..."
- Please read *AE 220*. This number has many "temple signifies" references to the Divine Human, the Word, the church, and the New Church.
- The divine question seems to be leading the remnant back to "a first love" experience of the Lord as the Divine Human. The tacit command is to build their church with the Divine Human as their blueprint.

"...how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing?"

- The word "how" has a wide variety of usages in our vocabulary: "In what manner or way; to what degree or extent, number or amount; in what state or condition; for what reason; why; with what meaning; to what effect." (*Webster's Dictionary*)
- "...how do you see it now ..." Seeing signifies the perception from the Lord of truths from the Word.
- How they perceived the Lord and how they acknowledged Him was an important discovery for the people of the church before "rebuilding" got underway. (*AC 938*)

"...is this not in your eyes as nothing?"

- *AC 2276 [2-3]* describes a state that sounds something like what we have in this verse. Some in the church "valued so little the Lord's merit, and redemption and salvation by Him." To illustrate this truth, the story of "thirty pieces of silver" is used.
- At first, restoring the temple was important to the people. But with adversity from the Samaritans and poor economical and produce returns, the house of the Lord sat unfinished. For sixteen years, the ruined temple stood untouched. "Is this not in your eyes as nothing?"

Putting It All Together

1. As we often do, let's begin by following the spiritual lead of the quote found in *P&P*. "The church when first instituted was full of truths; at the present day it is devastated."
This seems to make sense when we view their captivity, the loss of their center of worship, their place among a people who believed in self-worship, and their subjection to a king who demanded to be worshipped as a god. The march of daily absurdities over a long period of time must have "muted" the alarm system of their spiritual conscience. What a tremendous toll it took on all of the Jewish children born in Babylon. Doing and accepting the "norms" of their peers had to be detrimental to the truths of the Lord.
2. Repetition of phrases within this section seems to mirror the Lord bringing the people back to essentials. The persistent recurrence of phrases in the message given by Haggai helped to reestablish the source of their spiritual heritage. The question "who among you saw the temple in its former glory" draws them back to their remains. Then the Lord, like a loving parent, asks them how they see the temple now: "...is it anything in your eyes?" The lesson sets before us a powerful question: "how do you see it now?"
3. For us, this passage might point to things within us and within the church. Do we remember how we approached the Lord when we were children? Didn't we come to the Word with more openness, acceptance, and joy? Did we not thrill with the stories of the Word and its heroes and good winning out over evil? But then we entered school, and the world began asking us what we wanted to become when we "grew up." With that question impressed on us, we turned our attention to the rigors of getting into college and finding ways to pay for it all. The thrill of marriage, raising a family, wiping noses, putting bandages on cuts and bruises, taking children to music lessons, car-pooling, etc., etc. filled our lives. Is it any wonder that the temple of the Lord gets pushed aside by a degree of captivity?
The temple of the Lord can get left behind, and the joy of hearing truths from the Word suffers and disintegrates. The question "how do you see it now?" is worth reflection. Hikers lost in the woods, without a compass, must find a

clearing where directional clues may be found to help them get their bearings. Care to take the time to look?

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:1-3.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. How far, and long, do you think we get carried off in captivity to "Babylonians"? Does this vary with our state of life? Are there ways to avoid this pitfall?
2. How can we release ourselves from "Babylonian" control?
3. Do you believe our spiritual consciences can be "muted" by the daily absurdities going on all around us? How do we receive messages from our consciences? Think of experiences with your conscience being heard and ignored.
4. Repetition in the Lord's Word is good. It tries to draw us back to innocence. However, there is a danger of seeing the repetition as a boring nuisance. Do you have any suggestions to help us listen and not "numb out" the call to rebuild?

HAGGAI 2:4-5

"Yet be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the Lord; and strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; 'and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the Lord, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the Lord of hosts. 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!'"

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "Nevertheless a church will be instituted."

AE 573 [7]

- "The tribes were called 'hosts' because the twelve tribes taken together represented all the truths and goods of the church, and each tribe some universal essential of the church ...from all this it can be seen that the truths and goods of heaven and the church are meant in the Word by 'hosts;' which

makes clear why it is that Jehovah...God is called...'of hosts'..." Haggai 1:9, 14; 2:4, 8, 23 are cited.

Derived Doctrine

"Yet be strong..."

- In this passage, the Lord commands Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people to be strong.
- Remember that Zerubbabel's name means "born in Babylon or seed of Babylon."
- Joshua's name means "Yahweh saves."
- Mentioned in this way, the "people" may signify "doctrines." See AC 4485.
- As a general symbol of strength, iron represents truth that cannot be resisted. (AC 426 [3])
- What can we draw from the brief derived doctrinal notes above? During their Babylonian captivity, seeds of self-worship must have entered the minds of the Israelites and grown roots in their spiritual heritage. Consequently, they practiced external worship with little inner meaning. In this passage, the Lord seems to prepare to rebuild the spiritual temple by announcing the strength of His truth, strength like an iron that cannot be resisted.
- "Be strong, Zerubbabel" seems to show where the Lord would begin this restoration project. The nation's mixture of Babylonian and Jewish heritage mirrored the mixture of truth and falsity present with them. The Lord would first separate truth from falsity to bring order so that a new, enlightened leadership could guide the people with a spiritual prudence.
- The "be strong Joshua, the high priest..." is a command to the church and all of its forms of worship. The church must have a Divine strength, basic doctrinal truths, that cannot be resisted. No more mind games. No more bending and twisting truth to fit selfish priorities. Worship must be genuine; it must rise from the strength of the Lord's Word.
- "Be strong all you people of the land..." is a promise from the Lord to the people that any doctrines they carried with them and applied to life would become their own, an internal strength to lean on and follow. In place of blind faith or historical faith, He would give them true faith so they could "enter into the mysteries of faith with understanding." This exhortation for strong doctrines suits Haggai, the man whose name means "festival." His message is worthy of spiritual celebration.

"...work; for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts."

- Work signifies seeking what is true and doing what is good. (AC 63)
- Work, deeds, offices, and uses signify doing things for the neighbor, the country, the church, and the Lord's kingdom. (AC 6073)

- Work signifies that the people **were not** to be exempted from things that would be hard to bear. (AC 7104)
- Work is a good thing. It brings a sense of completion and exercises the "as-of-self" in a healthy way.
- "...for I am with you." To get some help with this phrase, we can think of the Lord promising to support or sustain us. "Sustaining" signifies getting internal strength or influx from the Lord to help support our external activities. (AC 9959 [2])

"According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt..."

- We might ask, "Which covenant are we to look up for our study of the internal sense?" In the book of Exodus, there are five references to a covenant: Exodus 6:7, Exodus 19:5, Exodus 20:1-7, Exodus 24:7, and Exodus 34:10. In addition, we need to look up the representation of the word "covenant."
 - "...there can be no covenant between the Lord and man other than conjunction by love and faith, and therefore 'covenant' signifies conjunction." (AC 665)
 - "...a 'covenant' signifies nothing else than regeneration and the things pertaining to regeneration.... The Lord Himself is called the 'Covenant' because it is He alone who regenerates.... In Malachi 3:1-2 the Lord is called the 'angel of the Covenant'.... In Isaiah 55:3-4... [He is called] 'covenant of eternity'..." (AC 666)
 - In Exodus 24:7, Moses reading the "Book of the Covenant" to the people represents the Lord showing (leading) them into the change of state they needed to make so conjunction with Him could come. "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do and hear," said the people when Moses read to them from this great book of peace.
- **Coming out of Egypt** has an interesting representation when we contrast it with **being in Egypt**. When a person is in Egypt, it represents the natural person separated from the spiritual person, the natural focus on self and the world instead of the Lord. It represents a person following the pride of self-intelligence and thereby perverting his or her rational. Coming out of Egypt is a turning point where the natural person seeks conjunction with the Lord. The person then seeks the things of the Word as his or her covenant with the Lord. (AE 654 [48])

"...so My spirit remains among you; do not fear!"

- The Lord's spirit represents mercy (AC 19) and truth (AC 24).
- Spirit, when spoken of the Lord, signifies the life of His Wisdom. (AC 49-51)
- The words "remains among you" and "do not fear" convey confidence, love, and courage to the minds and hearts of His people. A picture of the Lord taking children in His arms comes to mind when I read these promises. The

Lord's conjunction brings all the resources of His Love and Wisdom to the uses we serve.

Putting It All Together

1. *P&P* makes an announcement: "...a church will be instituted." There is no equivocation about it. Not maybe, not someday, not "I hope there will be." Instead, it is a firm statement: "a church will be instituted."
Be strong, governor. Be strong, priest. Be strong, people. This trine is worthy of notice. We may have the "seeds" of Babylon within us, but we also have the seeds of innocence and a soul formed by the Lord. No matter how distracted we become with the world's goals and activities, the Lord will still call us out of Egypt. We can set aside the self-directing wisdom of our natural side and listen to what the "Book of the Covenant" teaches so that we can sing with sincerity, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do and hear." What is the motto of this New Church song? We will do and obey!
2. Think about listening to the "angel of the Covenant." The "covenant of peace" allows the spiritual priestly uses to become strong and able to assist us in finding the "good of life." Worship will move out of the realm of custom and tradition into the realm of spontaneous and voluntary joy. This covenant will allow love to lead, selecting and marrying the truths of the Word with a conjugal principle in mind.
3. With a sincere worship of the Lord, the doctrines we use will spread throughout the "land," the minds of the Lord's people, to build a "temple" worthy and representative of our Lord.
4. Because we know a church will be instituted, we can work with more relaxed hearts and minds. The Lord will be among us, and we have nothing to fear from the hells. He is in charge and will give us the perception and materials to build the new temple of worship.
5. Be not afraid! "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:4-5.

Questions To Stimulate Reflections

1. The history of secular covenants is interesting. Basically, there are four kinds:
 - Suzerainty (the word means "above" or over lord). In this type of covenant, a superior binds an inferior to obligations defined by the superior.
 - Parity. In this type, both parties are bound by an oath.

- Patron. In this covenant, the superior binds him- or herself to some obligation for the benefit of an inferior.
- Promissory. A guaranty is given that future performances of stipulated obligations will be entered into and kept.

Do any, or all, of these covenants come close to the Lord's covenant with humanity? Why or why not?

2. Throughout our study, it is important to pay attention to our own reactions to the teachings we are learning, remembering that they apply to us as much as they did to the children of Israel. What does this section do for your confidence and courage? Can the Lord's Word pull us out of Egypt? How?
3. Have you ever wondered about that song, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and hear."? Have you felt the order is reversed? Do and hear. Shouldn't it be "hear and do"? Does it help to see that hearing represents obedience? Is the meaning "do and obey"?

HAGGAI 2:6-9

"For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land; 'and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the Lord of hosts. The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts. The glory of the latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the Lord of hosts."

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "When the Lord comes into the world, this church will be an interior church."

AC 28

- "It is a very common thing in the Word for 'waters' to signify knowledges, and consequently for 'seas' to signify a collection of knowledges...." Haggai 2:6-7 is cited as an example.

AR 331

- "'Earthquakes' signify changes of state in the church, because 'the earth' signifies the church; and because in the spiritual world, when the state of the church is perverted anywhere, and there is a change, there is an earthquake, and as this a prelude to their destruction, there is terror.... Hence it may appear what is meant by 'earthquakes,' 'shakings,' and 'commotions' of the earth, in the following passages.... [Haggai 2:6-7 is cited among others

passages.] But these things are to be understood as being done in the spiritual world, but not in the natural world...."

AE 400 [12]

- "In Haggai 2:6, 7... This is said of the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, and the 'new temple' there signifies a new church that is to be established by the Lord. This is meant by 'Yet once, it is for a little while,' and by 'then I will make all nations quake that the choice of all nations may come; and I will fill this house with glory,' 'nations' and 'the choice of nations' signifying all who are in good ...'house' signifying the church, and 'glory' Divine truth. This new church is further described by 'the temple' in that chapter thus.... The judgment in the spiritual world that will precede is described by 'I will make the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land to quake' 'the heavens and the earth' meaning all interior things of the church, and 'sea and dry land' all the exterior things of it."

AC 1551 [3-4]

- "...it is plain that here 'gold' is the wealth of wisdom, and 'silver' the wealth of intelligence.... In Haggai 2:7-9...the Lord's church is treated of, [where]...'gold' and 'silver' are predicated."

AR 912

- "The reason why 'gold' signifies the good of love, is because metals, as well as each and everything which appears in the natural world, correspond: gold to the good of love, silver to the truths of wisdom, copper or brass to the good of charity, and iron to the truths of faith.... That 'gold' from correspondence signifies the good of love, may appear from the following passages..." Haggai 2:8-9 is cited among many other passages.

AE 220 [8]

- "...there are many other passages in the Word where 'temple' is mentioned. That it may be known that 'temple' means heaven and the church, as also Divine truth proceeding from the Lord, I will cite...passages here, lest the mind should cling to the idea that a mere temple is meant, and not something more holy; for the temple in Jerusalem was holy because it represented and thus signified what is holy...." Haggai 2:7-9 is among the many passages cited.

AE 242 [19]

- "...Haggai 2:7, 9... treats of the coming of the Lord; by 'nations' those who are in good and in truths therefrom are meant; by 'house' the church (AC, n.

3720); 'the glory with which it shall be filled' means Divine truth 'The silver is Mine, and the gold,' means that truth and good are from the Lord alone." Haggai 2:7-9 is the cited passage.

AR 191

- "By 'temple,' in the supreme sense, the Lord is signified as to the Divine Human, in particular as to the Divine truth; but, in the representative sense, by 'temple' is signified the Lord's church in heaven, and...in the world.... That temple signified the church in the world is manifest from these passages..." Haggai 2:7, 9 is cited among other passages.

AC 3780 [5]

- Haggai 2:9, along with many other passages, is cited with the following explanation: "In all these passages in the supreme sense 'peace' signifies the Lord; and in the representative sense His kingdom, and good from the Lord... thus the Divine which flows into the good, or into affections of good, which causes joy and happiness from the inmost (the soul)."

Heaven and Hell (H&H) 287 [2]

- "That it is Divine and heavenly peace that is meant in the Word by 'peace' can be seen...from other passages where it is mentioned...Haggai 2:9.... Because 'peace' means the Lord and heaven, and also heavenly joy and the delight of good, 'Peace be with you' was an ancient form of salutation that is still in use; and it was ratified by the Lord in His saying to the disciples when He sent them forth..."

AR 306

- "...when a man is in the Lord, he is in peace with his neighbor, which is charity; in protection against the hells, which is spiritual security; and when he is peace with his neighbor, and in protection against the hells, he is in internal rest from evils and falsities. Since therefore all these are from the Lord, it may appear what is signified in general and in particular by 'peace'..." Haggai 2:9 is cited along with many other passages.

AE 365 [34]

- "In Haggai 2:9 'The house of God' signifies the church; 'the former house' the church that was before the Lord's coming; and 'the latter house' the church that was after His coming; 'glory' signifies the Divine truth that was in the one and the other; and 'the peace that He will give in that place,' that is, in the church, means all these things that are signified by 'peace'"

AE 400 [12]

- "In Haggai 2:6, 7...the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, and the 'new temple' there signifies a new church that is to be established by the Lord. This is meant by 'yet once, it is for a little while,' and by 'then I will make all nations quake that the choice of all nations may come; and I will fill this house with glory,' 'nations' and 'the choice of nations' signifying all who are in good...'house' signifying the church, and 'glory' Divine truth. This new church is further described by 'the temple'... The judgment in the spiritual world that will precede is described by 'I make the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land to quake' 'the heavens and the earth' meaning all interior things of the church, and 'sea and dry land' all the exterior things of it."

Derived Doctrine

1. "When (mercy) bursts forth, it bursts forth from the inmost..." (AC 5690)
2. "...[the faithful] know that life in the world... is only for some years, [and] is nothing compared with the life in heaven, which is eternal life; yea there is no ratio between the time of man's life in the world and the life in heaven... [think whether there can be] any ratio between a hundred thousand years and eternity, and you will find there is none." (AE 750)
3. "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night." (Psalm 90:4)
4. The Writings make many startling claims regarding the Lord, the Word, heaven and hell, angels, spirits, etc. But none are more startling than the teachings regarding the Last Judgment. People unfamiliar with the New Church are not taught that the Last Judgment occurred in 1757. Most of the world is expecting the Lord to come riding upon the clouds. They are looking for the "Great Rapture" when souls come out of graves and the ocean to meet the Lord. They are looking for the sun, moon, and stars to fall from the heavens. They are expecting definite (literal) physical manifestations of this Judgment.

The New Church teachings explain that the Last Judgment is not a physical worldly process but a spiritual one. The Writings reveal that the Lord fought with the hells and defeated them. Then He went into the heavens and completely reordered them. This revelation flies in the face of traditional Christian theology, which predicts an Apocalyptic doomsday.

When we read this portion of Haggai, we need to do so with focused spiritual views. The prophecies given through the prophets are about the Lord's "mercy bursting forth" to build an "interior" New Church. It is to be a spiritual church. It is to be "greater than the former" church. It will become the crown of all churches. The birth of this New Church requires a tremendous mental and spiritual "shaking-up." Old ways and old theology must be shaken to their foundations and then the newly rebuilt temple will come into its place.

Putting It All Together

1. Wow! We have quite a bit of help this time in "putting it all together." There are more than 14 direct teachings to use. With an eye to the Lord and His guidance, let's tie the general teachings together so that particulars will come alive when we study and reflect on their specific meaning for our lives.
2. P&P starts us off with the teaching that "when the Lord comes into the world, this church will be an interior church." A more interior church means changes in thinking must occur that lead to deeper things. The Lord brings to people a correct idea of Himself. The Writings teach that a person's idea of God is like the first link upon which all other concepts depend. If the first link is weak or flawed, all of the other links will be weak and supported by falsity.
3. The Lord often said things like "you have heard it said of old...but I say unto you..." The Scribes and Pharisees placed more value in their own man-made laws than in the teachings of the Word, and they often substituted their laws in place of the Word's teachings. Generation after generation contributed its man-made falsities. When a church departs from the truths of faith and the good of charity, that church's people bring their confusion to the spiritual world. Picture millions of souls, carrying confusion and falsity with them when they enter the World of Spirits. A black cloud interposed itself between heaven and the church on earth, cutting off the vital light of heaven. This cloud of falsity carried the church into spiritual captivity and restricted the spontaneity of love to the Lord. Like the Babylonian desecration of the temple, the holy things of the church were stolen and used in blasphemous ways. The Lord's Word was "chained," locked up and ignored. Hell felt that it was in control.
4. The timing of the Lord's advent was crucial. Humanity stood at the doorway of spiritual death. Human prudence entered a deathly "tail-spin," and the former temple's foundation lay in a shambles, a daily witness to futility. Then the Lord came to our rescue. He turned His zeal and truth to the rescue of the His people. He gathered together the good of truth and the truth of faith and did battle with the hells. For every trick they sought to use, He had an answer and a way to win. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little He laid the foundation for His new church.
5. The "gold" and "silver" of this church ARE MINE, says the Lord. The good and truth of the New Church belong only to the Lord. He is willing to fill the minds of His people with such wealth to use, but it is His.
6. This section implies that we must cooperate with the Lord in the shaking-up process, but we need a healthy view of this shake up. Reread the quote from the Derived Doctrine section: "When mercy bursts forth, it bursts forth from the inmost..." The Lord's internal goal is to fill us with energy. He wants to motivate us to do His will. Shaking up humanity isn't a bad idea when you think how often we get into a rut and resist change. To help us, He teaches us that "...when a [person] is in the Lord, he is in peace..." (AR 306)

7. The Last Judgment will take place "within the church and the person" and not outside the church or outside of the person. The New Church will be instituted. It will be an internal church. The Lord commands us to work with him, telling us that He will be with us as we build the church. It will be a thing of beauty. It will be more magnificent than the former church. Come and find peace within the walls of the New Jerusalem, says the Lord.

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:6-9.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. You might have wondered why there were two quotes about time in the Derived Doctrine section. The words "it is a little while" might have you thinking from the temporal side of the quote. Time in the eyes of the Lord is relative; 1,000 years to Him is like the blink of an eye. Compare this with our human perspective. What would be different in your daily life if you could think about time from the Lord's perspective?
2. Have you tried to explain the Second Coming or the Last Judgment to someone? How did you do? If you awkwardly stumbled through it, did you decide to hide, or avoid, these teachings from others? What are some effective ways to talk about this subject with people?
3. Look back at the passages from the Writings and see where each attaches to the literal sense.
4. What images come to you when you read about the new temple that "shall be greater than the former"? The Lord said that the new temple would be full? What's going to fill the temple? People? Doctrines? Both?
5. Peace has quite a few definitions in the Passages from the Writings section. Which one touched you the most? Why?

HAGGAI 2:10-14

"On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: Now, ask the priests concerning the law, saying, 'If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?' Then the priests answered and said, 'No.'

Then Haggai answered and said, 'So is this people, and so is this nation before Me,' says the Lord, 'and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.'

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "An external without an internal is of no use, and still less when the external has been falsified; so is it in the former church."

AC 3813 [3]

- "[There was an ordinance in the Jewish church] ...that Aaron, his sons, and they who sacrificed, and others who were clean, might eat the flesh of the sacrifices, and that this was holy... If therefore an unclean person ate of that flesh, he was to be cut off from his people.... That 'flesh' was called the 'flesh of holiness' (Jer. 11:15; Haggai 2:12), and the 'flesh of the offering which was on the tables in the Lord's kingdom..."

True Christian Religion (TCR) 717

- "Feasts in the ancient churches and also in the primitive Christian church were feasts of charity, at which they strengthened each other to abide in the worship of the Lord with sincere hearts. When the children of Israel ate together of the sacrifices near the tabernacle, it signified nothing else than unanimity in the worship of Jehovah; therefore the flesh that they ate, being a part of the sacrifice, was called holy (Jer. 11:15; Hag. 2: 12, and frequently elsewhere). Why not, then, the bread and wine and the paschal flesh at the supper of the Lord...."

AE 1082 [2-3]

- "...'bread and wine' have the same signification as 'flesh and blood,' 'bread' meaning the Divine good, and 'wine' the Divine truth, therefore these were commanded in place of flesh and blood. Divine good from the Lord was signified also by the flesh of the sacrifices that Aaron, his sons, and those who sacrificed, and others who were clean, might eat..." Haggai 2:12 is cited as an example.

AC 10130 [10-11]

- "By...unclean things are signified various kinds of evils and the derivative falsities which are from hell, and which are communicated, transferred, and received; the several unclean things signify each some specific evil; for evils which are unclean render man so, because they infect his soul; moreover from evil spirits and genii there flow forth the evils of their heart, and according to the persuasions of evil they infect those who are present. This

contagion is what is signified by the 'touch' of unclean things." Haggai 2:12-14 is cited among many other references.

AE 79

- "As all things among the sons of Israel were representative and significative of spiritual things, so also was touch; wherefore those who touched what was holy were sanctified, and those who touched what was unclean were polluted; for 'touch' signified communication and transference to another, and reception from another, as can be seen from the following passages in Moses..." Haggai 2:12, 13, 14 are cited.

Derived Doctrine

"On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius..."

- Twenty-four signifies "all things and [this number is] predicated of truths..." (AE 253 [6])
- Day signifies the state. Therefore, it appears that the Lord was examining the state of "all things" regarding the quality of their truths.
- Nine signifies all things conjoined in the complex: falsities and evils and good and truths. Note: nine is the result of multiplying three times three.
- By a "month" is signified "the end of the preceding and the beginning of the subsequent state, thus a new state..." (AC 3814)
- Two signifies all with respect to good. (AR 245)
- "In the internal sense a 'year' does not signify a year, is evident from the fact that the angels, who are in the internal sense of the Word, cannot have an idea of any year... instead of a year they have an idea of what is full in respect to states of the church, and of what is eternal in respect to states of heaven..." (AC 2906 [10])
- Darius represents the desire to be "adored as a god." (AC 1326 [2])

"The word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying..."

- This phrase is repeated often in our study. Why? It appears meant to remind us that the things being said are not human words but the Lord's words. The name "Haggai" means "festival" as if to remind us that at the core of what appears negative lies the spiritual sense, telling us news that will bring about a festive celebration of the New Church.

"Now, ask the priests concerning the law..."

- To ask signifies to investigate whether something is true, and to recognize divine truth. (AC 3385)

- The priests (from Aaron on to the Levites) represent the work of salvation in successive order. *(AC 10017)*
- The priesthood represents those who teach truth, and so lead to the good of life and to the Lord. *(AC 10794)*

Please Note the Two Questions Directed to the Priesthood.

Question One:

"If one carries meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?"

- To "carry" signifies to instruct. *(AC 4749)* What kind of instruction? External or internal? Memory-knowledges or internal spiritual knowledges?
- The NKJV says, "in the fold of his garment"; the RSV says "in the skirt of his garment"; the *Jerusalem Bible* says "in the fold of his gown."
- A garment represents the ultimate sense of the Word, or its sensuous natural sense. *(AE 543 [14])*
- A skirt signifies the outmost where a person's natural being is. This is also called "borders" elsewhere. *(AC 9917)*
- The signification of "meat" is somewhat directed by the literal sense when it teaches us it was carried in the "fold of garment." Meat, or flesh, signifies all pleasures that contain living good, which both delights and nourishes a person. *(AC 993-994)*
- The edge, or border, signifies the (basic) lower most things of the church. The edge or border is likened to memorized truths, knowledges from the Word, and rational truths. *(AE 518 [17])*
- A garment touching bread represents having communication with love. Stew or pottage signifies "a chaotic mass" of doctrinal things in a person "without any certain order." This "chaotic mass" needs to be "boiled down." *(AC 3316)*
- A garment touching wine signifies communication (again based on a garment representing externals) with a faith of charity as it relates to the neighbor and the Lord.
- A garment touching oil signifies communicating the good of love or charity to the neighbor from the Lord. *(AC 10, 261)*
- A garment touching any food can be understood from the representations of food and garments. Food signifies things that are useful to the soul. *(AC 5293)* Food and raiment signify that which nourishes the soul and everything external that clothes it. Things such as prosperity and respect are the external clothing of the soul. *(AE 1193 [4])*

"Then the priests answered and said 'No.'" Why was the answer "no"?

- "Holy" is the key word to focus on. Holiness is not an external thing. It reigns in the inmost heavens. (AC 9680) Holiness comes from within, from enlightenment while studying the Word. (AR 666)
- In other words, the word "holy" does not describe a state achieved with an external or accidental "touching." Instead, it describes a state in which love, wisdom, and use are in harmony. (I can imagine an internal "holy" order being inspired by an external order of worship that is carefully and thoughtfully planned.)

Question Two

"If one who is unclean because of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?"

- To be unclean signifies to be in a state of falsities. (AC 1666)
- "Unclean" signifies appropriating things that are impure and profane derived from incorrect thinking. (AE 654 [56])
- It also signifies a spiritual whoredom wherein adulteration of good and falsification of the Word take place. (AR 924)
- To seek the dead signifies a purposeful closing of the understanding in matters of faith. (AR 429) To touch the dead represents communicating with those states in which the will and understanding are not alive or vital (active) in the process of regeneration.

"So the priests answered and said, 'It shall be unclean.'"

- This question and answer are based on individual choices, not accidental events.
- Dead actions pollute. Adulterating the Lord's Word provides the medium in which a contagious and dangerous spiritual infection can grow and threaten the innocence of one's soul.
- This state of the mind and heart is "unclean" because it destroys the good states in the mind and heart. (AC 494)

Putting It All Together

1. "An external without an internal is of no use, and still less when the external has been falsified; so is it in the former church." (P&P) Everything that follows fills in this teaching. It appears that the Lord was explaining to the people that simply building the temple would not bring them any blessings or states of "holiness." Putting up stone and mortar doesn't touch anything holy. The existence of the temple guaranteed nothing. Therefore, the priests acknowledged that a priestly garment cannot bring holiness to anything simply by touching it.

2. Touching a dead body, on the other hand, was much more serious. The hearts and minds of the people must return to active concern with the "living" principles of the Lord and His Word. With this life, "shunning evil as sin" would become a meaningful deed instead of a memorized doctrinal phrase.
3. The priesthood responded to two questions with two different answers. One question was directed to the understanding, and one question was directed to the will. The Lord wants the understanding and the will to work together and support each other in the spiritual birth of the New Church. "An external without an internal is of no use..." Quite a powerful statement to think about in our study as we build, each day, a temple that will be representative and worthy to host the Lord in His Holy Temple.

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:10-14.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. When you read this prophetic section for the first time, what parts of the internal sense shone through? When you look back now, what parts of the internal sense shine through? If you studied Haggai without the Writings, how would you look for the inner meaning? How might your goals be different if you were studying without the Writings? What are your goals as you study with the Writings?
2. Let each person in the group give a general summary of the internal sense of this passage. Notice how different people will have slightly different summaries. Why do you think this happens?
3. In our study of the accidental touching of the garment, one of the derived doctrinal teachings mentioned the externals of the church being memorization, memory-knowledges, and the literal sense of the Word. The mere touching of them is not holy. Does that sound fair? We have our kids memorize recitations and give them little rewards. Hearing that these things are not holy in themselves might put a damper on that kind of work. What do you think about this external work? How can we bring such assignments into the sphere or state of holiness?
4. Does the quote "an external without an internal is of no use..." fit into something you have pondered (worried about or considered) regarding the work and life of the church? Explain.
5. What other questions would you like to contribute to this section?

HAGGAI 2:15-17

"And now, carefully consider from this day forward: from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the Lord – 'since those days, when one came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were but ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were but twenty. I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands; yet you did not turn to Me,' says the Lord."

Passages From the Writings

P&P

- "...where truth has been turned into falsity, in which there is hardly anything of the church..."

AC 2253 [5]

- "As fifty is a number, it indeed appears to involve nothing beyond the number; whereas in the internal sense what is full is everywhere meant by it, as in Haggai 2:16, that is, instead of fullness there was not much. 'Fifty' would not have been mentioned here in the Prophet unless it had been significative."

AC 4759 [2]

- "In these passages [Haggai 2:16, 17 is cited among others.] 'twenty' denotes that which is unholy, unclean, and profane."

Derived Doctrine

"And now, carefully consider from this day forward..."

- "And now" seems to remind the listener to put aside any thought of past merit. The listener is to think about the present ("now") with eternal life as the goal or end. A new beginning, a new spiritual end, is the Lord's plan.
- The word "carefully" means to be alert, be attentive, take heed, and be circumspect.
- "Circumspect" signifies to keep the Commandments, for they cover everything of life and worship. (*AC 9282*)
- Look at the word "attentive." "He who is wise, attends to the end." (*AC 9407*)
- "...by 'this day' and by 'to-day,' there is signified perpetuity and eternity of state..." (*See AC 2838, 3998, 4304, and 6165.*)
- Each piece of this phrase seems to emphasize the need to reflect on life and its essentials.

- **"...from this day forward..."** carries the message of change and vitality from this moment onward. The Lord commands us to break out of the spiritual rut and build on eternal values.

"...from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the Lord..."

- What is meant by "stone upon stone"? First, let's look at these words as they were used (in the negative sense) by the Lord in the Gospels: *Matthew 24:2; Luke 19:44; Luke 21: 6*. In these passages, the Lord told the disciples that the material temple they were so impressed with would be destroyed: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." In *Luke 19:44*, while weeping over the city of Jerusalem, He used these words: "...the days shall come upon thee...they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another..." In *Luke 21:6*, noting the rich coming into the temple and expressing adoration for the temple adorned with valuable stones and gifts, the Lord said: "...behold the days will come...where...there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
- "That 'there should not be left of the temple stone upon stone that should not be thrown down' signifies the total destruction and vastation of the church ('stone' signifying the truth of the church)..." (*AE 220 [9]*)
- "That there shall not be left stone upon stone... [signifies] that the Lord was wholly denied among them, on which account also the temple was destroyed from its foundation." (*AE 391 [4]*)
- "That there shall not be left of the temple stone upon stone... means that every Divine truth, consequently everything of the church, is to perish; for the end of the church, which is called the consummation of the age, is here treated of." (*AE 630 [7]*)
- "...that 'there is not one stone upon another,' is signified the end of this church, in that no truth whatever would then be left..." (*AR 191 [3]*)
- *"...from before stone was laid upon stone..."* Does this point us to the purity of truth as it came to the church from the Lord? Does it refer to a time prior to the church "shaping" "forming" or "hewing" the many stones of truth? The stones of the temple were put together into a building. But denial, rejection, and falsification caused not one stone to remain upon another stone. Truth belongs to the Lord; it does not spring from human creativity.
- This point seems important to consider as we look at the next portion of our lesson where "false measurements" are spoken of. Measurements correspond to the quality of truth present with the church. *Leviticus 19:35* warns against doing injustice to measurements. Keep fair scales. *Deuteronomy 25:13-16* warns of the abomination of false weights. We are exhorted to keep honest scales. *Amos 8:5* warns against falsifying the scales by deceit. Each warning bears on our attempts to manipulate the stones of truth. The Writings warn against "hatching" ideas and concepts to fit our ends. There are approximately 35 passages I could offer on the danger of "hatching falsities." Here are three to begin with: *AC 991, 2385 [2]*, and *2831*.

"Since those days, when one came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were but ten..."

- Since those days... Which days? The days prior to the falsification of truth?
- Coming to a heap... Heaps or cairns were constructed by the children of Israel, at the direction of the Lord, to signify a witness of conjunction in love. (AC 4192) In the opposite sense, heaps, cairns, and piles describe the accumulation of offending falsities that needed to be restrained. (AC 8286)
- Ephahs refer to a measure of dry things. One ephah is equivalent to one half of a bushel. Therefore, the heap of 20 ephahs would have been 10 bushels. The Writings teach us that measurements are mentioned in the Word when states are examined to give an estimate of good. (AC 8540)
- Twenty signifies all things of good and also all that is holy. (AC 10222)
- Ten has many representations; one of them refers to remains. (AC 858) Does the reduction in number signify the loss of something? A full state of twenty represents *all that is good* and *all that is holy*. "All" seems to be the important key to our question. Half of something is missing. Is the missing portion good or truth? Or is it an indication that the people were "half" of what they could or should have been?

"...when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were but twenty."

- AE 695 [23] tells us that "wine-vat" represents the Word in respect to the goods of love.
- To draw water signifies a state of instruction. (AC 3057)
- To draw wine signifies a wish to investigate what belongs to faith. (AC 1071)
- To seek wine means to have an affection for truth. (AC 3069)
- "Fifty baths from the press..." A bath is a liquid measurement. One bath equals five and one half gallons, so 50 baths would have been 275 gallons.
- Remember AC 2252 says that 50 represents "what is full."
- AR 651 teaches that a press (a wine press) signifies the truth of faith and also the investigation of works to see if the perpetrators of the works were in evil.
- AC 4759 [2] explains the meaning for finding "twenty" as that which is unholy, unclean, and profane.

"I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands..."

- "I" represents the Lord.
- Remember the story of Moses observing an Egyptian man "smiting" a Hebrew man? AC 6758 explains that the Egyptian striking the Hebrew signifies "alienated memory-knowledges endeavoring to destroy the truths of the church." Could we see just the opposite meaning in this passage by applying this concept to the Lord? Could the "I struck you" here mean Divine Truth and Divine Good endeavoring to destroy the falsities (of all kinds) within the people of the church?

- A blight is a disease or injury that results in withering, cessation of growth, and death of parts (such as leaves or stems). In human terms, it means to ruin or frustrate one's efforts. *Webster's Dictionary* also defines blight as "blasting."
- Mildew and blasting have correspondences:
 - Mildew signifies falsity that seeks to destroy the life of the understanding of truth; in a word it is that which seeks to destroy the spiritual life of faith. (*AC 83 65 [3]*)
 - Blasting signifies falsities in the corporeal-sensuous part of man. (*AE 63 [20]*)
- *AC 7553* teaches that hail signifies falsities destroying everything of the church within humanity. *AR 714* describes hail as direful and atrocious falsities working toward the destruction of the church.
- "...the labors of your hands", in the positive sense, signifies having ability, power, and confidence. (*AC 878*) The Lord "taking" these from the hands of the Jews indicates just the opposite. The Lord notes how falsity takes away the usefulness of these attributes from the hands.
- It must be noted here that the Lord never tries to destroy the faith of an individual in the church. Nor does He want a blight, mildew, hail, or loss of confidence to occur. It is the falsification of the truths of faith that causes the onset of disorder. The Lord opens everyone's interiors so the truth may be seen and known. It is the falsity within a person that becomes uncomfortable in the Lord's presence. Evil can't exist and thrive in the Lord's presence, and therefore, evil wants to blame the Lord and ascribe all of its "problems" to Him. The words of the prophet Haggai are written to accommodate that appearance that occurs when evil is present, that it is the Lord striking man.

"...yet you did not turn to Me, says the Lord."

- To "turn" signifies reflection, reflection on the revelation given by the Lord. It means to diverge from prior thinking and movement away from the Lord. (*AC 6836*) In the negative sense, to "turn" means to follow things that pervert. (*AC 4816*)
- Within these words one can hear divine sorrow. The Lord seems to say, "How often would I have gathered you under My wings...but you would not."

Putting It All Together

1. "Where truth has been turned into falsity, in which there is hardly anything of the church..." (P&P), there will be blight; there will be mildew; there will be hail; and the toiling of our hands will be useless. Blight, mildew, and hail will be within the church as long as people turn away from the Lord. Without the Sun of Heaven, the "blast" from hell will wither and bruise the life of the church, causing its leaves to die. The black mold of hell will cover and block the finest gifts the soul wants to give to the Lord.

2. The "call" to rebuild the temple of the Lord is more than a call for an aesthetic building dedicated to "honoring" the Lord. It is a call to turn around and put first things first. It is a call to spontaneously love the Lord from within ourselves. It is a call to put the toil (ability, power, and confidence) of our hands into causes that have a divine end.

It would appear that this call is often forgotten or ignored. Think about how many times this theme appears in the messages of the Word. This is not useless repetition. It is a sign that we forget. It is a sign that we get distracted when we "hatch" our own ideas in place of the Lord's. It explains why the church, when out of control, has no stone upon stone and leans on debris as a foundation. It is a sign that we get comfortable with what we build with our own hands and think the Lord will comply with our expectations.

All of this may be read as negativity. Hell would like us to think it is. Hell would like us to blame any and all problems on Divine impatience. If hell's message is believed, the spiritual temple never gets built because the blame game pulls up excuse after excuse, making spiritual reformation seem futile. The message – the type of response we need to make – seems to hinge on changing the reaction described in the closing lines of this section: "...yet you did not turn to Me..." Instead, we need to emulate the responses Samuel and Isaiah made to the call of the Lord:

"And the Lord called Samuel." And Samuel said: "Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears."(1 Samuel 3:9)

"...I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then I said, Here am I! Send me." (*Isaiah 6:8*)

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:15-17.

Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. Are we able to return in our minds to a state where we are close to the Lord, a time before "stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the Lord"? What can we use as an example of this state? How about the innocence of our remains? We have nothing to do with them. Remains are saved and stored by the Lord in places known only to the Lord. Think about inviting or asking the Lord to use these remains in your life. How would you do that? In a way, He places our remains one on top of another. The Lord clears the foundation for their placement. Our positive nature, our positive prayer carries us to our Beginnings, our innocent states, because that is where the Lord is.
2. How well can you identify examples of blight, mildew, and hail in daily life? What are some good techniques for identifying them?

3. The blame game is a favorite tactic of hell. This tactic encourages a person to believe that it is the fault of parents, friends, or the church that he or she is so unprepared to build the spiritual temple. The Lord is a hard taskmaster, say the hellish spirits. He expects too much from us. To what degree do we participate in this exercise of futility? How can we escape it?
4. Could you understand the meaning of the "heap of ephahs" and the "fifty baths"? We used derived doctrine to search for their meaning. Discussion time used to talk their meaning over will be time well spent. Write out some of the applications you found.
5. Negativity is a pit-fall we all have to overcome. A preoccupation with negativity will close our ears to the Lord's call. The Samuel and Isaiah response is so positive and refreshing. Don't we really wish we could answer the same way to the Lord's call? Although we don't here His voice as directly as Samuel and Isaiah did, the Lord calls us. How? How can we hear and answer?
6. Are we as a church still struggling with "stones" that we have shaped and put in a certain order? Do we ever lean toward "hatching" concepts? This is a tough question. By discussing it we run the risk of entering negativism. Try to avoid that. Instead, talk about ways to increase the church's desire to bring about good changes based on doctrine.

HAGGAI 2:18-19

"Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid-consider it: Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded fruit. But from this day I will bless you."

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "...although there are truths in abundance in the Word."

AE 403 [9]

- "In Haggai 2: 18, 19 ... these words in the spiritual sense mean that there are goods and truths yet remaining; all goods and truths from the first to last are meant by 'the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive-tree,' 'the vine' meaning spiritual good and truth; 'the fig-tree' natural good and truth; 'the pomegranate' in general that which belongs to knowing and perceiving, and in particular, the knowledges and perceptions of good and truth; and 'the olive-tree' the perception of celestial good and truth; 'the barn' signifies where all these are, - either the church or the man in whom the church is, or the mind of man which is the subject."

AC 9552

- "...[that] 'pomegranates,' signify 'the memory-knowledges of good'...is evident from ...passages where these are mentioned... [Haggai 2:19 is cited] ... 'wheat, barley, and the seed in the barn' signify celestial things internal and external; 'the vine, the fig tree, and the pomegranate' signify spiritual and natural things in their order, the last of which are the memory-knowledges that belong to the natural and sensuous man; wherefore 'the pomegranate' is mentioned last."

Derived Doctrine

"Consider now from this day forward...."

- We have covered this phrase before, but let's review it in general. It is a call to consider and reflect on your present state and then to look forward to the eternal goal of life and work toward spiritual uses.

"...the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month..."

- *AE 253 [6]* teaches that "'twelve' signifies all. *AC 577* teaches that it is predicated of truths, "...likewise 'twenty-four' because that number is the double of the number twelve..."
- Days signify the successive states of regeneration. (*AC 6*)
- Nine signifies all things conjoined into one complex, goods and truths, or evils and falsities. (*AE 401 [15]*)
- Months signify a state of life as to truth. (*AR 925*)

"...from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid – consider it..."

- A foundation, or base, signifies full support by truth, or by means of the Word. (*AC 9643*)
- The Lord's temple signifies His Divine Human, which cannot be destroyed, for when it seems to be destroyed, it rises again, glorified. (*AC 7847 [4]; 10406 [4]; AE 220.*)
- "Consider it" is used twice in this passage. Does it make sense that the Lord uses this phrase twice to speak to the will and understanding because these two complete each other?

"Is the seed still in the barn?"

- A barn signifies the church or the individual of the church where good and truth are. (*AE 403 [9]*)
- "Seed" signifies charity, and by "seed" angels understand charity, which is the essential of the faith of a church. (*AC 1025 [3]*)

- The Lord's question here is whether there is charity left in the good and truth of the church. The Lord knows the answer. He asks the question so the church can think about the answer. Are the essentials of charity still present within the church?

"As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded fruit."

- The vine represents spiritual good and truth.
- The fig tree represents natural good and truth.
- The pomegranate represents that which belongs to knowing and perceiving.
- The olive tree represents the perception of celestial good and truth. (AE 403 [9])
- These plants and trees "have not yielded fruit." Why? Could this fruitlessness be related to the blight, the mildew, or the hail? Spiritually, the seeds were in the barn, ready to be planted. There is an abundance of fruit in the Word. The problem lay within the church, which was in spiritual disarray. Neglect, inattentiveness, and coldness of heart kept the fruit from appearing on each of the trees.

"But from this day I will bless you."

- "The Lord's 'blessing' [them]...in the Word signifies fructification and multiplication because they proceed from [the Word]." (AC 43)
- "But" in this state of barrenness, the Lord, as always, comes to the rescue when humanity reaches its last limit and is about to perish. It is the Lord's way. He wants to be sure we know that our fruitfulness or multiplication is not the result of our own prudence and efforts.

Putting It All Together

1. P&P points to the great abundance (of seed) within the (barn) Word. What happened to the church that would have caused its people to forget or not see these things? Was it the long captivity in Babylon? Did their faith get mixed with paganism? Was the barrenness of the trees due to doubts that arose when God allowed them to be humiliated before all nations? Whatever symptom we point to, we need to look for what really caused the problem. The prophecy of Haggai begins by pointing to the following causes: their belief that the Messiah would come to exalt them to glory; their unwillingness to be taught by the Word; their reliance on themselves instead of on the Lord; their belief that their own needs were more important than the Lord's needs.
2. In spite of all the church's mistakes, the Lord's providence worked toward the promised rescue. He called on the remnant to come together to restore the beauty and dignity of worship. He blessed them with fruit on the trees of good and truth. He revitalized the temple – the barn – the seed – the trees –

and the foundation of all good and truth. The message of good triumphing over evil is sounded once again to the people of the church. "Consider now – consider it" is announced throughout the church for those who are willing to hear and who are willing to be part of this exciting rebuilding project.

Read and Reflect

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:18-19.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. Many of the questions for this section were asked in the section above. Review the summary and answer them.
2. The one question not mentioned above is this: The Minor Prophets herald the restoration of the church over and over again. Why? For the sake of the Lord's first advent or the Lord's second advent? Or is this theme there to calm us? Is it given to urge us to hold on in the face of the doubts hell places in our minds about the future of the New Church organization?

HAGGAI 2:20-22

"And again the word of the Lord came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, 'speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying: 'I will shake heaven and earth, I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots and those who ride in them; the horses and their riders shall come down. Every one by the sword of his brother.'"

Passages From the Writings

P&P

- "All things of the former church will be destroyed."

AC 5321 [11]

- "As most of the expressions in the Word have an opposite sense, so have 'chariots,' and in this sense they signify doctrinal things of evil and falsity, and also the memory-knowledges that confirm them, as in these passages...." Haggai 2:22 is cited.

AR 298

- "That 'a horse' signifies the understanding of the Word.... A 'chariot' signifies doctrine from the Word, and a 'horseman,' one who is wise by means of it... 'horses' in the opposite sense... signify the understanding of the Word and of truth falsified by reasonings, and like wise destroyed; as also one's own intelligence..." Haggai 2:22 is one of the verses cited.

AR 437

- "...'chariots' signify doctrinals...'horses' signify the understanding of the Word; and 'many horses,' what is plenary...that 'a chariot' signifies doctrine, is plain from these passages...." Haggai 2:22 is one of the many cited.

AR 694

- "...'a throne' is mentioned in relation to the government of evil and falsity..." Haggai 2:22 is cited among other references.

AE 253 [7]

- "As 'throne,' in reference to the Lord, signifies heaven in respect to all Divine truth, so in a contrary sense it signifies hell in respect to all falsity." Haggai 2:22 is cited.

AE 355 [22]

- "In Haggai 2:22 [it] is said of the destruction of falsity and evil, and not of the destruction of any nation or kingdom; for 'nations' signify evils, and 'kingdoms' (like 'peoples') falsities. For this is prophetic, not historical. This makes clear what 'horse' and 'rider,' and 'chariot and him that rideth in it' signify, namely, that 'horse and rider' signify a perverted intellect and reasoning therefrom and 'the chariot and him that rideth in it' the doctrine of falsity or heresy, and those who are in it."

AE 988 [4]

- "...a man may be induced to believe mere absurdities and falsities, provided they are set up as dogmas by those placed in authority and are confirmed by others who for various reasons prefer to live in blind obedience? For instance, that ... nature is everything; ... that there is little difference between man and beast, that they die ... and do not live after death; that the Word is not holy.... 'Thrones' signify false doctrinals in other passages in the Word, as in Haggai 2: 22."

Appendix 1 to the Treatise on the White Horse

- "That 'a horse' should signify the understanding of truth, and, in the opposite sense reasonings, which appear as if they were the result of understanding, in confirmation of falsity, must needs appear strange at this day; I will therefore bring together still more passages from the Word, where the horse is mentioned. Thus in the following..." Haggai 2:22 is cited among others.

Derived Doctrine

"And again the word of the Lord came to Haggai..."

- This sentence seems like a reminder that the things about to be spoken by Haggai are not from a finite mind but are from the Mind of Infinity. These things are from the Lord and not some clerical council.
- Haggai's name means "festive" so it seems to indicate a joyous message is about to be given.

"...on the twenty-fourth day of the month ..."

- Twenty-four signifies "all things and [is] predicated of truths." (AE 253 [6])
- Day signifies the state of all things. (AC 23)
- Month signifies the beginning of a new state. (AC 3814)

"Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah..."

- Remember that the name Zerubbabel means "born in Babylon" or "seed of Babylon." If a new beginning, a new state, is to come to fruition, the Lord must speak to the "seed" of Babylon, and the "seed" of Babylon must be directed by the Lord.
- Governors signify generals in which and under which are particulars. (AC 5290)
- Judah represents doctrine from the Word that relates to the love of the Lord. (AR 350 and AC 3880–3881)
- Do we see the reordering of the church and its ruling principles?

"I will shake heaven and earth..."

- To "shake" represents to divest oneself of unclean things. (AC 1748)
- To shake (out) dust signifies to get rid of what is damned lest it adhere. (AE 365 [8])
- To shake heaven has many levels of meaning: the internal man (AC 16); the angels who constitute heaven (AC 9987); the spiritual and celestial things of the Lord's kingdom both in the heavens and on earth. (AC 2162 [8])
- This statement seems to refer to the reordering of the heavens and the earth.

"I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms..."

- In the Passages from the Writings section, we had a direct teaching about the "absurdities and falsities" that authority and blind obedience induced on the minds of the people. Those absurdities and falsities, and not physical kingdoms, are the "thrones" that will be overthrown by the Lord. (AE 988 [4])
- To overthrow signifies to utterly remove evils and falsities. (AC 9320)

"I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms..."

- The words "destroy" and "Lord" don't fit well together until one refocuses on His work to remove evil, falsity, and hell from His church and His children. As evil and falsity flee from His presence, they cry out "we are being destroyed." Because the Lord "IS" and hell "is not," it can't exist in His presence. His presence cleanses, vivifies, enlightens, and lifts His people out of the caves of ignorance and squalor.
- With the Gentiles, there is a subtle difference. Their worship has ignorance within it. They represent a variety of forms of worship. Within their worship, a "mutual" charity exists, but at the heart of their worship is "indiscriminate" charity. The Gentile state is quite appealing and strong in appearance. In the eyes of the Lord, that which is invisible must become visible. Mutual good is only as useful as is its view of the Divine Human.

"I will overthrow the chariots and those who ride in them..."

- To overthrow means to "utterly" remove evils and falsities. (AC 9320)
- Chariots represent doctrinals. (See Passages from the Writings for teachings). But what kind of doctrinals? Our text clearly lets us know that this refers to human doctrines, not doctrines from the Lord.
- Those who ride on them will be thrown off. This too indicates that the rider has been directing doctrine and not the Lord. That kind of rider must be removed.

"...the horses and their riders shall come down..."

- Riders signify those who are subject to fallacies that will lead them to recede from the ways of the Lord. (AC 6401)
- Horses signify the understanding of the Word. (AR 437)
- Doesn't it make sense that these things must come down so the Lord's Church can flourish?

"Every one by the sword of his brother."

- In order to focus on the meaning of these words, we must turn to *P&P* for direction with the derived doctrine. *P&P* states that: "All things of the church will be destroyed."
- A sword signifies a person's insane persuasions by which he or she wishes, or tries, to enter the mysteries of faith. But such a person will fail and will therefore be borne away by corporeal and earthly things. (*AC 309*)
- A sword signifies divine truths in the externals that were turned this way or that way to please the natural person. (*Doctrine of Sacred Scriptures 97*)
- A sword signifies vastations. (*AC 1460 [2]*)
- A sword in the positive sense signifies divine truth combating from divine good. (*AC 288-9*)
- A brother signifies the union of charity and faith. (*AC 367*)
- When Cain slew Abel, this signified that a "separated faith" extinguishes its brother "charity." (*AC 366*)
- A brother delivering a brother to death signifies that falsity shall destroy good. (*AE 315 [21]*)

Putting It All Together

1. The newness of the Lord's Church cannot be built with old materials. The old church was the creation of councils, tradition, man-made rules, turning truth this way and that way to please the external man. In the process, the brother faith tried to rule over charity. True order is for charity to lead and guide faith. *AC 365* has a wonderful explanation of this truth.
2. For many years (we have no idea how long), falsity lived in the minds of people, and they carried it with them into the world of spirits. This falsity began to trouble the heavens. The Lord needed to "shake" heaven and earth. He had to "utterly" shake, remove, cleanse, and vivify the church. The absurdities and falsities of the church wanted to block the light of heaven. *P&P's* statement that "All things of the former church will be destroyed" makes sense when we think about the Lord's work to rebuild His Temple: He announces that there will be a new foundation, new materials, new light, and a new charity leading the faith, a brotherhood that conjoins and protects all of the members within the family of the New Jerusalem.

Read and Reflect

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:20-22.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. Change and improvement are not always easy. When we get comfortable with a life style and the Lord comes along and asks us to change, it's tough to overcome the old way. It feels like the life within us is being "killed" or destroyed. Have you found a way to give in to the Lord's "remodeling plans" for your spiritual life?
2. The shaking process is described as a method to keep evil and falsity from adhering to us. Looking back over your life, can you recall some "shaking" experiences that hurt at the time but significantly helped and shaped your life?
3. As a New Christian Church organization, we have different doctrinal ideas and customs than the former Christian church. But there are some "old" materials that try to push their way into the spiritual life of the church. Can you name some of them? Begin by thinking of the following "old" ideas. "Sermons and doctrinal classes need to dwell more on "happier" topics." "Sin, evil, and regeneration are depressing and upsetting themes." "We are losing our young people. We are driving them out of the church with our coldness and rigidity." "I come to church to feel better about myself." What are some other "old" ideas?
4. In my mind, I keep hearing the theme of Haggai: "Consider now" ... "Consider your ways" "Consider from the day that the Lord's foundation was laid" urges us to think about what the Lord wants for us. My impression is that we run away from this kind of reflection. How do you see it?

HAGGAI 2:23

"'In that day,' says the Lord of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,' says the Lord, 'and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you,' says the Lord of hosts."

Passages From The Writings

P&P

- "The church will be among others."

Derived Doctrine

"In that day..." signifies in that "state."

- What state? A state of having the dust of falsity shaken off of us? A state of being called to consider the reality of the Lord? A state of being vastated

(emptied out)? A state of recognizing that we need to respond to the new building process?

"I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant..."

- The likely answer to our questions about the state this "day" represents may be found in the next phrase: "I will take you..."
- Again, Zerubbabel's name means "born in Babylon" or "seed of Babylon."
- The great spiritual reclamation project, the spiritual ecological work, begins for the uplifting of the New Church.
- "My servant" carries a powerful message. A servant signifies the external serving the internal person. (AC 1468)
- Servant also signifies the external obeying the rational (AC 1713) and good appearing to be in supremacy. (AC 3601)
- There are other representations for the word "servant," but these few should help us as we consider the inner meaning of servant.

"[I] will make you like a signet ring..."

- The word "signet" also means "sign or token."
- A signet represents a token of consent, confirmation, and testification. (AC 4874)
- A ring signifies a conjunction or holding of things together. (AC 9657)
- The ring given to the prodigal son by his father represented or signified the confirmation of the power given to the son in the household. (AC 5317)
- "I will make you a signet ring..." carries with it the message of the special qualities and design of the ring. **The Lord makes the signet ring.** This one is not made by us, and I picture it as unique and special for each child of the Lord's New Church.

"...says the Lord of hosts."

- AC 2 reminds us that the Word of the Lord must "contain within it such things as belong to heaven, to the church, and to religious belief, and that unless it did so it could not be called the Lord's Word, nor could it be said to have any life in it."

Putting It All Together

1. The closing summation of this passage has within it a preamble to the greatest "Covenant" made by the Lord. The covenant has nothing to do with the historical rebuilding of Israel's temple. Instead, it is a covenant that will have an effect to eternity. Like the many announcements in the Old Testament of the Lord's first advent, the books of the prophets are reminders of the greatest promise made in Revelation. There will be a crown of all churches,

and it shall live forever and ever. This prophecy uses the symbol of a signet ring. What could the ring represent?

2. The ring, more specifically a signet ring, is given as a confirmation and testification that the Holy City New Jerusalem will arise out of the rubble of all of the former churches. When it comes about, all will be welcomed into its city. Haggai's prophecy emphasizes the inclusiveness of this church. No tribe or nation has exclusive rights to it. This church has the salvation of all of the Lord's people at heart. The Word of the Lord is not for a specific race or time. So the wording of the *P&P* explanation of this last verse is quite significant when we reflect on the mission of the New Jerusalem. "The church will be among others." Such a message runs counter to the evangelical teachings held by many in the Christian world. Quoting the literal sense of the Word, they announce that only those who are "born again" will enter through the gates of salvation.

What view do you have on this important issue?

Read and Review

Read the selection from *P&P*.

Read Haggai 2:23.

Questions To Stimulate Reflection

1. The Lord uses the "seed of Babylon" as a beginning point. He calls on the governor. He uses a man named Haggai – the festive – to do the work of restoration. Wouldn't it have been faster if He had sent Haggai first to a person who had a cleaner slate? Couldn't there have been some mighty warrior raised up? Can you pull together the spiritual how and why of the Lord's ways of restoring the temple?
2. Have you ever wondered why you were born into the New Church and not some other faith? If you converted to the New Church, have you ever looked back to see the trail of events that led you to that choice? Do you have a feeling of being called to be part of the building up of the New Church?
3. The signet ring is a wonderful symbol. I can't recall seeing it used in any pictures or stained glass windows. Do you think it would be useful to make it a part of the story we tell others about mission of the New Church? If you like to draw, think about designing a picture of this ring.
4. Have you discussed the inclusiveness of the New Church concepts with a fundamentalist Christian? If you did, were you able to hold your own when he or she quoted passages from Paul and the literal sense of the Word? How do the teachings about inclusiveness apply to your daily life? How might you find them informing your perspective on various issues?

5. How much of a difference have you noted between the spiritual sense and the historical sense of Haggai? How does the literal story seem to highlight or cloak the spiritual sense?
6. It is hoped that from this study you now feel a deeper affinity with this book of prophecy called Haggai. Do you?

Epilogue: A Summary of the Book of Haggai

CHAPTER ONE

When the Lord makes His advent, what is His purpose for coming into the hearts and minds of people? Is it to exalt a race, a tribe, a church, or a religious denomination?

To turn His Advent into personal grandiosity is to make a serious spiritual mistake. The people within the church did this, and the results were devastating. They lost the Word. They lost sight of its meaning, and they could not be taught by the Word.

The literal sense describes their disorder, saying they were a church that sowed much but brought in little. It was a church that ate but didn't have enough to satisfy its needs. They drank but didn't have their thirst assuaged. They had clothing that gave no warmth. They earned wages but lost the wages because their money pouches had holes in them.

Instead of focusing on the mirror truths of the Lord, they focused on the distorted mirror of narcissism. In that mirror of self-love, they worshipped themselves and could not see love of the Lord and the neighbor. Love of self and love of the world became ruling principles. Disorder has its effects. Look at the history of the children of Israel. Israel's national security was always under some threat by the nations around her. They suffered through assault after assault.

The spiritual sense explains how the sacking and captivity of Israel related to their weak spiritual state. Such things happen in the external to reflect the condition of the internal. After they were released from Babylonian captivity, the Israelites put off seeking things that would help them achieve their spiritual freedom. They fixed up and paneled the walls of their house before caring for the Lord's house. They did not do "first things first." They delayed following the order of heaven. So the prophet Haggai called them to "consider" their ways. Ignoring the Lord while caring for self deprives the soul of its heavenly sustenance; this was the message the Lord spoke through His prophet Haggai.

CHAPTER TWO

The Lord reminded His people that the church, when first instituted, was full of truths. The present church was empty and devastated. In spite of its present condition, the Lord told them He would purify the church. He told the church that He would come into the world to establish an internal foundation. The Lord shared His message this way: "An external without an internal is of no use..."

To illustrate the potential within the Word, the Lord asked whether any seed remained in the barn, a great thought-provoking question. Then He announced to the Israelites that in spite of the blight (the blast), the mildew, and the hail, good would come from such spiritual tremors. The clinging falsities that had adhered to the church would be loosened and shaken off. The Lord promised to expose their falsification of the Word. The twisting and turning of the meaning of the Word would be thrown off. The former falsity of the horse and its rider would be thrown off, checked, and destroyed.

The Lord's New Church is for everyone. Those who love truth for truth's sake, those who love the Lord and the neighbor, and those who want the Lord to lead them will be like a signet ring. There will be a spontaneous consent from those in the church to be led. There will be a conjunction and healing within the heart. Externals and internals will wed, and the ring of commitment, or the conjugal principle, will be blessed and enriched.

A beautiful ring will be part of the covenant. The ring's beauty is special because the design, and the choice of materials, will reflect the truths of the Lord. He, and no one else, makes the ring.

The Lord's trees, the vine, the fig, the pomegranate, and the olive tree, would once again bear fruit. The blight, the mildew, the hail, and the drought ended. The blossoms and fruit on the trees reminded the exiles of the presence of the Lord and the potential of the reconstruction of the temple. Our study helps remind us that the spiritual fulfillment of the descent of the Holy City the New Jerusalem has happened and the effects of the Lord's Covenant are beginning to reach out throughout the world. A spiritual healing is underway. How can we be sure of this? Recall, the Lord's comforting words in the book of Revelation:

"In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was a tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." *Revelation 22:2*

Read the Book of Haggai online. Study Scripture verses with commentary, concordances, and use highlighting, underlining, take notes in the Bible. This summary of the book of Haggai provides information about the title, author(s), date of writing, chronology, theme, theology, outline, a brief overview, and the chapters of the Book of Haggai. Author. Haggai (1:1) was a prophet who, along with Zechariah, encouraged the returned exiles to rebuild the temple (see Ezr 5:1-2; 6:14). Haggai means "festal," which may indicate that the prophet was born during one of the three pilgrimage feasts (Unleavened Bread, Pentecost or Weeks, and Tabernacles; cf. Dt 16:16). Based on 2:3 (see note there) Haggai may have witnessed the destruction of Who wrote the book? The prophet Haggai recorded his four messages to the Jewish people of Jerusalem in 520 BC, eighteen years after their return from exile in Babylon (538 BC). Haggai 2:3 seems to indicate that the prophet had seen Jerusalem before the destruction of the temple and the exile in 586 BC, meaning he was more than seventy years old by the time he delivered his prophecies. From these facts, the picture of Haggai begins to come into focus. He was an older man looking back on the glories of his nation, a prophet imbued with a passionate desire to see his people rise up from the ashes