

Title: **ZERUBBABEL**
A TYPE OF CHRIST

Text: Haggai 2:20-23
Subject: *Haggai's Message to Zerubbabel*
Date: Sunday Evening — August 17, 2008
Tape: Haggai #11
Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Merle Hart*
Introduction:

The year was 536 B.C. The Jews had been in captivity in Babylon for 70 years. Finally, the day came when Darius the Mede and Cyrus, the Persian overthrew Babylon. Cyrus turned out to be the man God had chosen in eternity past to return the Jews to their homeland and restore the temple. Cyrus was not a believer. He did not know and worship the Lord God. But he was, like all other creatures, under the absolute rule and control of the Almighty.

150 years before he was born, God declared by his prophet Isaiah that an unbelieving king named Cyrus would be raised up to deliver his people from Babylon, send them back to Jerusalem, rebuild the temple and revive the worship of God in Israel (Isaiah 44:28-45:4).

(Isaiah 44:28) “That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”

(Isaiah 45:1-4) “Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; (2) I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: (3) And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel. (4) For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.”

Cyrus had been raised in idolatry, but Jehovah ordained that this unlikely man would be “like a shepherd” to lead the children of Israel home.

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At last, the hour came. Cyrus had become the ruler of the nation that held Israel captive. Some historians picture him as a kind, benevolent man whose heart broke for the captive Jews. Others picture him as haughty, cruel and bloodthirsty. But that really doesn't matter. The God of Eternity chose the heathen king for Jacob's sake, even though he did not know the God of Jacob.

We read in Ezra 1 that in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing (Ezra 1:1-4).

(Ezra 1:1-4) “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, (2) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. (3) Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem. (4) And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem.”

All the Jews who had been captive in Babylon were suddenly free to return home. What must have gone through their minds? It must have been something like the feelings the East Germans had after being bound by that wall of hatred for all those years. Those who chose not to go were to contribute to the expenses of those who went, including a freewill offering for the temple. To assist in the project, King Cyrus then took the valuables that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem 70 years before and returned them to the Jews. They included 1,000 gold trays, 1,000 silver trays, plus thousands of miscellaneous things. In all there were over 5,000 gold and silver items returned to the people for use in the temple once it had been rebuilt.

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In Ezra 2 (vv. 1-2) the Holy Spirit lists the numbers and names the groups of people who returned at this time to the land. Joshua, the son of Josedech, the grandson of the high priest Nebuchadnezzar had killed, was named the high priest of the restored people. As such, he was, of course, typical of Christ, our Joshua (Jesus), our great High Priest. And a man by the name of Zerubbabel was chosen by Cyrus (chosen by our God!) to be the Governor of the New Jerusalem. This man, Zerubbabel, is held before us in Scripture as a magnificent, instructive type of our great Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. God's last message through his prophet Haggai (Haggai 2:20-23) was a message to Zerubbabel.

(Haggai 2:20-23) “And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying, (21) Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; (22) And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. (23) In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Three times in verse 23 we are told that this is the message of Jehovah, the lord of Hosts, to Zerubbabel, by his prophet Haggai. This is the message of the Triune Jehovah (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) to him who is our Savior, our Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. Haggai is commissioned to close his prophecy with a particular and special message to Zerubbabel, governor of Judaea, who is here set before us as a type of Christ.

THE SHAKING

It will be obvious, to any who take the time to compare Scripture with Scripture, that it is the intent of the Holy Spirit that we read these words of Haggai as the words of the Triune God to our Divine Mediator. Let me show you. — The shaking of heavens and earth refer to the overthrow of Satan's kingdom and power, heathen idolatry and all that opposes Christ and his blessed gospel.

- By Fulfilling and Ending Legal Ceremonies (Hebrews 12:27; Colossians 2:16).

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- By Abrogating and Abolishing Jewish Traditions.
- By Exposing and Destroying Idolatrous Superstitions.
- By Casting Satan out of the Heaven of Men's Hearts (Luke 10:18), those Strongholds in which He has Entrenched Himself (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Shaking the heavens and the earth, with trouble and vexation, with darkness and evil, with sickness and disease, with war and rumors of wars, with drought and pestilence, the Lord God gathers his elect to himself, the Lord Jesus calls his ransomed from afar.

(Isaiah 43:6-7) “I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; (7) *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

ASSURANCES GIVEN

In verse 22 God gives sweet assurances to his Son, as his Servant, that “*he shall not fail!*” Let the type be lost in the reality. Christ must prevail! “*He must reign!*”

He says, “I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms.” — He does so “*By pouring contempt upon princes, and causing them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way*” (Psalm 107:40). — “*By putting down the mighty from their seat, and exalting them of low degree*” (Luke 1:52).

He changes the times and the seasons, removes kings, and sets up others in their stead (Daniel 2:21). Our God will destroy the strength of kingdoms, overthrow the chariots and their riders, the mighty armies of great nations, rather than allow injury to come to his Church or permit his purpose of grace to be hindered. “*Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth*” (Psalm 124:8). Though the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing, he says, “*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*” and says to him, “*Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance*” (Psalm 2:6, 8). Let the heathen be warned and fall down before our God and his Christ, and “*kiss the Son,*” for he must reign, and all his foes must be his footstool.

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There is a council in heaven that will break all contrary councils upon earth. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands (which is Christ the Conqueror) breaks in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold. The God of heaven has set up his kingdom, the Church, which shall never be destroyed. The kingdom of our God shall break and consume all those kingdoms, and it shall stand forever, (Daniel 2:44-45; 7:21-22, 26-27).

OUR GREAT SAVIOR

Now, in the time that remains, I want us to gaze at the picture of our great Savior we have set before us in this man, Zerubbabel. **Is Zerubbabel called the servant of the Lord?** In that character he became the type of our all-glorious Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Exodus 21:1-6) “Now these *are* the judgments which thou shalt set before them. (2) If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. (3) If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. (4) If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out by himself. (5) And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: (6) Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.”

(Isaiah 42:1-4) “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. (2) He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. (3) A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. (4) He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.”

(Isaiah 50:5-7) “The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. (6) I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not

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my face from shame and spitting. (7) For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.”

(John 10:16-18) “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd. (17) Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. (18) No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

Is Zerubbabel called the chosen of the Lord? Is he God’s elect? Here again he typifies our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Jesus, we bless thy Father’s Name;
Thy God and ours are both the same:
What heavenly blessings from His throne
Flow down to sinners through His Son!

‘Christ be my first elect,’ He said,
Then chose our souls in Christ our Head,
Before He gave the mountains birth,
Or laid foundations for the earth.

Thus did eternal love begin
To raise us up from death and sin;
Our characters were then decreed,
‘Blameless in love, a holy seed.’

Predestinated to be sons,
Born by degrees, but chose at once;
A new regenerated race
To praise the glory of His grace.

With Christ our Lord we share our part
In the affections of His heart,
Nor shall our souls be thence removed
Till he forgets His first Beloved!”

— Isaac Watts

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Is Zerubbabel a signet? Surely, again, the type is obvious. To be made as a signet is to be advanced and highly exalted, as Joseph was in Egypt. Because of that which he has accomplished, our Lord Jesus is that One the Father has advanced and highly exalted, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence (Colossians 1:18; Philippians 2:5-11; Isaiah 45:20-25).

(Isaiah 45:20-25) “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me. (22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. (23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. (25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

(Philippians 2:5-11) “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; (11) And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

A signet is a seal. Christ is that One whom God the Father has sealed (John 6:27). He is that One by whom all the blessings of grace are sealed to his people in regeneration, by the gift of his Spirit.

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Look at the last line of verse 23 again. The Lord of Hosts declared that he would make Zerubbabel as a signet for a very specific reason. He says, “*for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts.*” Those words might be translated, “for I am well pleased in you.” — That is our Christ. It is he alone in whom the Father is well pleased (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). Indeed, that can be said of no other! **The triune God is well pleased with our great Zerubbabel.**

1. He has delivered his captive people from the house of bondage.
2. He built the altar of God (Ezra 3:2). — He made a way for man to come to God.
3. He met and overthrew the enemy, who sought to destroy his people.
4. Before him, the mountains of adversity melt into nothingness (Zechariah 4:7).
5. He is the Builder of his church (Zechariah 4:6-7). — That is not our job. He may use us, but he is the builder!
6. He will finish the building of his house.
7. When he was done, the very forces in the world that attempted Zerubbabel’s downfall, God used to accomplish his purpose. So it shall be with our great Zerubbabel, the Lord Jesus Christ.

His goal is to bring his people home, and “*He shall not fail!*”

Amen.