

## Open in prayer

### Read Haggai 2:20-23

<sup>20</sup> The word of the Lord came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month: <sup>21</sup> ‘Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah: I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. <sup>22</sup> I will overturn royal thrones and destroy the power of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overturn chariots and their riders. Horses and their riders will fall, each by his brother’s sword.

<sup>23</sup> On that day’ – this is the declaration of the Lord of Armies – ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant’ – this is the Lord’s declaration – ‘and make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you.’ This is the declaration of the Lord of Armies.

## Introduction

o What is the most powerful object you have ever held? • Maybe it was a key to a first car, a title deed, or the hand of a dying parent. Power, we think, is something you can grasp. Something solid. Something you can control. ••

^ But what if real power is not something you hold? • What if it is a voice that speaks, and the ground beneath you trembles? • What if it is a hand that writes a date on a divine calendar, and every throne on earth is suddenly on notice? ••

R We have been walking verse by verse through Haggai. • In 536 BC, Cyrus of Persia issued a decree allowing the Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. About 50,000 returned. They laid the foundation with great celebration, but then opposition from enemies stopped the work. Sixteen years passed. The temple site sat silent. ••

R In Haggai 1:1-15, we heard God confront their neglect. They had panelled their own houses while His house lay in ruins. They worked, but the hole in their pocket never filled. Yet even in that rebuke, God gave assurance. I am with you, and He stirred their spirits to begin rebuilding. • Then, from Haggai 2:1-9, fresh discouragement set in because the new temple seemed so small. But God encouraged them with a breathtaking promise. I will fill this house with glory, and the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former. • Last week, from Haggai 2:10-19, we reached the great turning point. God traced their defilement, called them to consider. And then declared, From this day on, I will bless you. The drought ended. The harvest began. The seed sprouted in the soil. ••

o This morning, the prophet's gaze lifts from the harvest in the fields to the horizon of history. The God who promised to bless His people on a specific day has, on that very same day, another word. And it is terrifying. The day is coming when Jesus will shatter every enemy and seal His people forever. • This is what we will see. Two points. First, the Day the Divine Warrior shatters every enemy. And second, the Day the Divine King seals every believer. ••

o And right now, we must look at that first, sobering reality. Listen closely. The text is not polite. It is not tame. Because the Lord of Armies is marching.

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## 1) The Day the Divine Warrior shatters every enemy (Haggai 2:20-22)

Have you noticed the repetition of dating in the book of Haggai? • This oracle comes on the very day God promised to bless His people's work in Haggai 2:10-19. Now God talks of judgment on the nations. By His divine calendar, a Day of reckoning is inevitably coming. ••

Have you noticed the repetition of the title the Lord of Armies in the book of Haggai? • The Lord commands His heavenly host. And with them, He will unleash havoc on all His foes. ••

On that Day of havoc, in verse 21, the Divine Warrior will shake the heavens and the earth. And, in verse 22, overturn royal thrones. He will destroy the power of the Gentile kingdoms. Chariots and their riders will be overturned. Horses and their riders will fall. They will fall each by his brother's sword. ••

This Day of the Lord is when God breaks into history, culminating in cataclysmic destruction. All things brought to their appointed end. Their final conclusion under His judgment. • History is heading towards a certain end. The Day of the Lord is the door through which time enters eternity. ••

No one knows when this day will happen. Nor can we. God has not revealed the date. But we are 2,540 years closer than when Haggai prophesied. His promised Day is all the nearer. ••

What will it be like? • The text tells us. The sky unravels. This cosmic chaos lifts us out of world history, and puts us on an eschatological trajectory. Thrones crash. This isn't a localised skirmish, but a world wide war. Entire empires end. Chariots careen. As the world's war machine is wrecked. And soldiers turn swords on comrades. Complete confusion leading to self-destruction. ••

The Old Testament prophets foresaw this terrifying Day. ••

Zechariah wrote that the nations will gather against Jerusalem for battle. The holy city will be captured. Houses will be looted. And then the Lord will go out to fight on the Day of Battle. • That is exactly the movement Haggai gives us. The nations rage. Then the Divine Warrior takes to battlefield earth, toppling thrones. ••

Joel saw the Lord roaring from Zion. Thundering from Jerusalem. The heavens and the earth are shaking. A terrible and dreadful Day. A Day of divine destruction. Divine vengeance. When the Lord makes His voice heard in the presence of His army. And those who carry out His command are powerful. • The shaking Haggai announces is the very cosmic upheaval Joel saw. The

Lord of Armies advances with His heavenly host and none can stand before Him. ●●

∂ Jeremiah said that the Day belongs to the Lord, the God of Armies. It is a Day of vengeance. Jeremiah describes a gruesome sacrifice. The sword will devour and be satisfied. It will drink its fill of blood because it is a sacrifice to the Lord, the God of Armies. ● When Haggai's chariots overturn and riders fall by their own brother's sword, we are staring into that same Day. ●●

^ The word overturn is the same word used for the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The same word used for the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea. Throughout Scripture, God specialises in overthrowing the proud and rescuing the humble. ● Cities of sin, chariots of empire. He overturns them all. ●●

^ In the immediate context, this oracle takes aim at the Persian superpower dominating over Israel. Within a generation, Persia would stagger. Greece and then Rome would rise and fall. Each toppled throne is a down payment on the final Day. ● But the ultimate shaking of heaven and earth still awaits. We read Haggai knowing that every empire since has been a dress rehearsal for the final act to come. ●●

⊕ Consider the military might of the world. ● The United States spends 15 trillion Rand on its military. Every year. China spends 7 trillion Rand. ● But on that Day, every military machine will be useless, every army helpless. What the Divine Warrior did to Sodom, Gomorrah, Pharaoh, and Egypt He will do to every military power. Whether horses and chariots or drones and aircraft carriers. ●●

⊕ The Divine Warrior is coming. And He comes to overthrow the world. He comes to tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God. He shakes the heavens. He shatters the earth. He dismantles every rebellion. He crushes every enemy. ● He will not be stopped. ●●●

## Application

^ So what do we do with a Day like this? ● I have two words. One for the nations, one for your own soul. ●●

∂ First, every empire that trusts in horses and chariots, in fighter jets and drones, in trillion-dollar budgets and iron domes. Every power that raises its fist against heaven is standing on ground that is about to shake. ● The Divine Warrior does not negotiate with superpowers. He does not fear their war

colleges or nuclear arsenals. He speaks. And chariots overturn. He breathes. And riders fall. So let no Christian pin their final hope on any political party, any army, any economic system. They are straw before the divine flame. They are clay before the seal. • So let us be wise. Pray. And engage as citizens. But do not fear, and do not be surprised. *Not even a nation that wraps itself in the name of God will be spared from the shaking to come. God will not be a mascot for any empire. His Kingdom will not rise through the gradual triumph of Christian politics. But through the catastrophic return of the King. A shaking is coming. And when it comes, only God's Kingdom will be left standing.* ••

ð Second, a word to your soul. If something inside you trembles. Because you know you are not right with God. The thought of the Divine Warrior approaching does not makes you shake inside. Good. • It is a mercy of God intended to wake you up. ••

P Here is the gospel that will not shake. When the Divine Warrior returns, His robe will be stained with the judgment of His enemies. • But before that Day comes, He wore a different robe, one soaked in His own blood, poured out for you on the cross. He took the shaking you deserve. The Warrior became the Lamb. And that means that now, anyone hidden in Him can face the coming Day without fear. • So flee to Him. Not tomorrow. Not when you have more certainty. Now. While the Rider extends mercy, take shelter in His blood. Bow the knee. Call on His name. Let the terror of Haggai drive you to the tenderness of Jesus. Whoever comes to Jesus will never be cast out. ••

The Day brings destruction. But it also brings a sealing. The Divine Warrior comes to overthrow the world. But the Divine King comes to seal His own. •••

## 2) The Day the Divine King seals every believer (Haggai 2:23)

on There is an Old Testament covenant puzzle this text invites us to solve. • A puzzle of a cursed king. A powerless governor. And a signet ring. ••

ð The first piece of the puzzle is a cursed king. • **Zerubbabel** is the grandson of Jeconiah, also called Coniah. A king whom God rejected. The prophet Jeremiah had pronounced a plain, public curse on him. A curse that seemed to lock the door on David's line forever. Even if you, Coniah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would tear you off. Record this man as if childless. None of his descendants will succeed in sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah. ••

Å The second piece of the puzzle is a powerless governor. • **Zerubbabel** is not even a king. He is a governor. A petty official in a backwater province of the

Persian Empire. The Persians are the superpower. Humanly speaking, invincible. They shake the world. Not the other way around. The returned exiles are a tiny remnant, impoverished and struggling merely to survive. They have no army. No influence. No throne. Humanly speaking, there is no more hope for David's throne. Persia dominates. David's line is powerless. The promises to David seem buried under Persian rubble. ●●

^ The third piece of the puzzle is a signet ring. ● Verse 23 reads, On that day I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel. My servant. And make you like my signet ring. What is a signet ring? In the ancient Near East, a signet ring is not jewellery. It is authority. When a king pressed his ring into soft clay, the impression bore his image and carried his legal power. To possess the signet ring was to act with the king's full authority. It was the most intimate symbol of delegation and trust. The king's identity. The king's signature. The king's power. And the king's unbreakable decree. To be made the Lord's signet ring is to be installed as His chosen king, bearing His own authority to rule on His behalf. ●●

P Now hear what God says. Zerubbabel, you are not a figurehead. You are not a placeholder. I am making you like my signet ring. You will bear My authority. You will act in My name. You will carry My power. The curse upon Jeconiah's line is not the final word. My grace is. My choosing is. ● Zerubbabel himself never sat on a throne. Yet the promise was true, pointing to a greater Son who would. What God pulled off with one hand, He reattaches with the other. Judgment dismantled. Grace rebuilds. ●●

^ And this is the hinge. The ground of it all. God says, For I have chosen you. ● The verb, chosen, is deliberate. It is sovereign. It is unconditional. God chose Abraham from Ur. God chose Israel from all nations. God chose David from the sheepfold. And now God chooses Zerubbabel. Not because he deserves it. Not because the line earned it. Not because Persia permits it. Because God is gracious. Because God keeps covenant. Because God's purposes cannot be defeated by a curse or an empire. Not by Jeconiah's unfaithfulness. Not by Babylon's conquest. Not by Persia's dominance. God chooses. And what God chooses, no power in heaven or on earth can reverse. ●●

^ So here is the contribution this point makes to the argument. ● Despite impossible odds, the Day is coming when the Lord will sovereignly enthrone His Davidic King. The curse cannot stop Him. Persia cannot stop Him. History cannot stop Him. ●●●

## Application

P **Believers, what does this mean for you?** • The ultimate King this signet-ring promise points to is Jesus. And He is coming as the Divine Warrior and the Divine King. He chooses. He saves. He seals. What He promises, He performs. What He begins, He completes. Great assurance flows from this. ●●

P **Are you a new convert?** • Your faith still tender. Your steps unsteady. You wonder if you can endure. Hear this. God chose you in Christ before the foundation of the world. Your salvation does not rest on the strength of your grip on Him. It rests on the strength of His grip on you. The same God who took Zerubbabel from a cursed line and made him His signet ring has set His seal on you. You have been marked with the promised Holy Spirit. The down payment of your inheritance. You may feel small. But you bear the King's authority as His adopted child. Rest in Him. ●●

P **Are you a believer who has walked long with Christ?** • You wonder if your labour is in vain. Remember this. What He begins, He completes. Zerubbabel did not receive the signet ring because he was powerful. He received it because God chose him. Not your faithfulness. Not your strength. His. The King is crowned at the right hand of God. He intercedes for you. Every promise God has whispered in His Word, every work He has started in your soul, every battle against indwelling sin, He will bring them all to completion. Look to the risen Christ, God's true Signet Ring, the exact imprint of His nature. He holds all authority in heaven and on earth. He will finish the good work. He will present you blameless before His presence with great joy. Trust in Him. ●●

P **Are you a mature saint?** • Our King is coming. He has placed His seal upon you, and entrusted you with His gospel. Authorised to represent His kingdom. Through the proclamation of the gospel. To speak His Word with His authority. You have been sealed. Not for passivity, but for faithful stewardship until He returns. Pour out your life in service. The chaos that terrifies the world does not threaten your security. So serve with boldness. Endure with hope. The King has chosen you. He has saved you. He has sealed you. And He is coming to be glorified in His saints. Great assurance. ●●

R So the signet ring is not just Zerubbabel's story. It is yours. The King has sealed you. • Now we see why the most powerful object in the universe is not something you grip in your hand, but the signet ring God presses into your life forever. ●●●

## Conclusion

Å We started with a question. What is the most powerful object you have ever held? A key. A title deed. The hand of a dying parent. Power, we assumed, is something you grasp. Something solid. Something you control.

^ But Haggai has dismantled that assumption. The most powerful object in the universe is not something you hold. It is the powerful One who holds you.

ð The day is coming when Jesus will shatter every enemy and seal His people forever. We have seen two realities this morning. First, the Day the Divine Warrior shatters every enemy. The sky will unravel. Thrones will crash. Chariots will overturn. Every empire that raised its fist against heaven will be reduced to dust. If you are not hidden in Christ, that Day is pure terror. Flee to the Warrior who became the Lamb, before the shaking begins.

P And second, we have seen the Day the Divine King seals every believer. The curse cannot stop Him. The empire cannot stop Him. Zerubbabel received a promise his life could not contain, and Jesus fulfilled it perfectly. If you are in Christ, that Day is your sealing. You bear His authority, you carry His name, and no power in heaven or on earth can reverse it. Rest in the King who chose you, saved you, and sealed you forever.

^ The hand that holds the signet ring is pierced with nail marks, and it will never let you go. That is the power you can build your eternity on. Not something you grasp. But the One who grasps you.

^ Amen.

## Benediction

**Romans 15:13**, 13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Close in prayer**

## Homiletic indicators

- The operative word in the sentence is underlined.
- R – Instruction
  - **Body:** Natural, one hand gestures.
  - **Voice:** measured, firm.
- ^ – Uncion
  - **Body:** Forward, expressive.
  - **Voice:** Raised, faster.
- ð – Fear
  - **Body:** Narrow eyes, still shoulders, lift your chin slightly (exposed posture).
  - **Voice:** Breathily, higher pitch, quick shallow breaths. Speak into the back of the throat.
- O' – Anger
  - **Body:** Jaw forward, stable feet (no shifting weight), sharp hand strikes (karate chop motion).
  - **Voice:** Hard attack on consonants. Drop pitch slightly, but increase volume on key syllables. Staccato.
- P – Happiness
  - **Body:** Relax shoulders, soften the brow. Open palms, wider stance.
  - **Voice:** Rise in melody at the end of phrases. Bright, forward resonance (smile while speaking).
- Å – Sadness
  - **Body:** Heavy eyelids, slight forward slump, hands still or clasped low.
  - **Voice:** Lower volume, monotone descent (each phrase ends lower than it started). Use mostly single-syllable words.
- □ – Disgust
  - **Body:** Wrinkle nose, pull back your head, sharp turning away from the pulpit.
  - **Voice:** Nasal, sharp, with a "negation cadence" (rising then falling sharply on the sin's name). Hard glottal stops.
- o – Surprise
  - **Body:** Eyebrows up, slight backward step or open-mouth inhale.
  - **Voice:** Bright, high onset. Use a sudden upward interval (a leap in pitch on the unexpected word).
- • – Pause
  - **What it does:** Allows the last sentence to land, convict, or heal.
  - **Length:** 1 second (colon), 2 seconds (period), 3+ seconds (after a weighty statement or call to worship).
  - **Body:** Stop moving. Hold eye contact. Do not smile or nod. Let the silence be uncomfortable.
  - **Delivery note:** A pause feels longer to you than to them. Trust it. Hold one more beat than you think is comfortable.

*The Lord is going to shake, overturn, destroy the power of the Gentile kingdoms.*

<sup>20</sup> The word of the Lord came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month:

<sup>21</sup> ‘Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah:

1.) I am going to shake 1.) the heavens

2.) [S] and the earth.

2.) I will overturn royal thrones

3.) [S] and destroy the power of the Gentile kingdoms.

3.) I will overturn 1.) chariots

2.) [S] and their riders.

1.) Horses

2.) [S] and their riders will fall,

each by his brother’s sword.

*The Lord is going to take Zerubbabel and make him like a signet ring because He has chosen him.*

<sup>23</sup> On that day’ – this is the declaration of the Lord of Armies –

1.) ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant’ – this is the Lord’s declaration –

2.) [S] ‘and make you like my signet ring,

[G] for I have chosen you.’ This is the declaration of the Lord of Armies.

### This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
  - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
  - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
  - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while...).
  - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
  - [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
  - [-] [+ ] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
  - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
  - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
  - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
  - [I' ] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
  - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
  - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
  - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
  - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
  - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
  - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
  - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
  - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
  - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

### This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

# Sermon preparation worksheet

**Passage:** Haggai 2:20-23

**1. How has the author organised this passage?** a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

- a) 1) The Divine Warrior overthrows the world (Haggai 2:20-22).
- 2) The divine King restores the covenant (Haggai 2:23).
- b) Haggai 2:20-23 is discourse with a single speaker. The two part outline is revealed by the repetition of the dating, used throughout the book, first of the message (Haggai 2:20), and then of that future day (Haggai 2:23b). There is a repetition of actions that the Lord will do. The first section outlines what He will do to the Gentile kingdoms (Haggai 2:20-22). The second section outlines what He will do to Zerubbabel (Haggai 2:23).
- c) Day of the Lord brings judgment and salvation, as the Lord dismantles all rebellious powers and coronates His chosen King.

**2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?** a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

- a) In Haggai 2:10-19, the people receive a word of present renewal. Defilement is removed, and blessing is promised. Then, on that very day, a second oracle is given (Haggai 2:20-23) that lifts their eyes from immediate harvests to ultimate history. This matters because the literary structure demonstrates that the God who restores their covenant standing presently will one day, on that great Day, fully dismantle all rebellious powers and establish His chosen King. Present obedience is lived in the light of judgment and salvation to come.
- b) Zerubbabel is the grandson of Jehoiachin (Jeconiah), the king whom God rejected and Jeremiah pronounced cursed (Jeremiah 22:24-30). He is not a reigning monarch but a governor under Persian authority. The Persian Empire, under Darius, is at its zenith. Humanly invincible. The returned exiles are a tiny, impoverished community struggling merely to survive. This matters because the historical impossibility magnifies the divine power required for God to fulfil His promise. If Persia cannot be shaken by any human force, then its dismantling must be God's own work. If Jeconiah's line is under divine curse, then the establishment of Zerubbabel as a signet ring can only be an act of sovereign grace. The historical context thus reveals that the emphasis on God dismantling rebellious powers and establishing His chosen King is a word of pure divine sovereignty. No human power can frustrate it, and no human curse can ultimately prevent it.
- c) In the ancient Near East, a signet ring was not merely jewellery but the instrument of authority and identity. When a king pressed his signet ring into soft clay, it bore his image and carried his legal power. To possess the king's signet ring was to act with the king's full authority (Esther 3:10, 8:2, 8:8). It was the most intimate symbol of delegation and trust. This matters because Zerubbabel is not being made a figurehead. He is being given the very authority of the Great King. To be made a signet ring is to be authorized to act in God's name and with God's power. The coming King will not merely sit on a throne but will exercise divine authority. The establishment of the King is the establishment of divine rule on earth.
- d) Haggai 2:23 alludes to 2 Samuel 7. God promised David an everlasting throne and a son whose kingdom would be established forever. Zerubbabel is a direct descendant of David. This matters because God 'eternally establishing His chosen King is the explicit fulfilment of that covenant. Haggai is not inventing a new promise. He is reactivating the ancient promise that seemed dead. The King who will be established is the heir of David. Haggai 2:23 also alludes to Jeremiah 22:24-30. Jeremiah said of Jeconiah (also called Coniah), Even if you were a signet ring on my right hand, I would pull you off. He pronounced him childless (in terms of the throne) and said no descendant would sit on David's throne. This matters because it creates theological tension that Haggai resolves. How can a descendant of cursed Jeconiah become a signet ring? The answer, God's grace overcomes His judgment. The curse is not abrogated but transformed in the Messiah. Zerubbabel stands in the line, but the ultimate fulfilment is in Jesus, who is both son of David and Son of God, in whom curse and blessing meet at the cross.

**3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?**

Despite impossible odds, the day is coming when the Lord will sovereignly enthrone His chosen King.

**4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?**

Jesus Christ is the true and greater Zerubbabel, the Son of David born through that lineage. The babe of Bethlehem is the divine Signet Ring, the exact imprint of God's nature, in whom all authority resides. At the cross, the curse upon Jeconiah's line was fully absorbed as Christ became a curse for us. The resurrection was the Father's declaration that Jesus is His chosen King. Jesus will soon return on the great and terrible Day of the Lord, the Divine Warrior shaking the heavens and the earth, overthrowing every rebellious throne, and shattering the power of every kingdom that opposes the Lord. Then He will establish His millennial reign and ultimately an eternal kingdom where the Lamb reigns forever. The promise to Zerubbabel finds its complete fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

**5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?**

The day is coming when Jesus will shatter every enemy and seal His people forever.

**6. What applications will you make?** a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

- a) Live in light of the coming day when Jesus will shatter every enemy. Identify your biggest enemy this week. Sin. Fear. Accuser. Name it out loud. Then remind yourself, that enemy is already shattered. The King returns to finish what He started. You are not fighting for victory. You are fighting from victory. The Spirit is your seal. Nothing can break it.
- b) Surrender before the Day of judgment comes. You have two options. Surrender now. Or be shattered then. Call on Jesus today. Confess your helplessness. Ask Him to save you. Not because you deserve it. Because He died for rebels. He will seal you. And you will stand on that day.

**7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline?** a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) The Warrior and the Seal

- a) 1) The Day the Divine Warrior shatters every enemy (Haggai 2:20-22)
- 2) The Day the Divine King seals every believer (Haggai 2:23)

**On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:**

**1. How has the author organised this passage?**

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type, and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

**2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?**

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

**3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?**

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

**4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?**

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

**5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?**

**6. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.**

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

**7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.**

**On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:**

- o 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- o 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- o 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- o 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- o 4) must be found in the text.
- o 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- o 6) should flow from 5).
- o 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5).