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MAKING GOD SPEAK TO YOUR ADVANTAGE (HAGGAI 2:8)

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Abstract

'Mine is the silver, and Mine the gold' (Haggai 2:8). With these words from the mouth of God the prophet Haggai meant to encourage the Jews, who after their return from the Babylonian Captivity prepared to build a new Temple, and doubted whether this Second Temple would in beauty and glory equal the First. This article is about the use and misuse of the divine message in Byzantine times, the various interpretations to which it was subjected, and the diversity of the intentions with which it was brought forward.

Church Father John Chrysostom clashed with some of his believers over a selfish and false appeal to Haggai 2:8, and over a fraudulent sequel added by the falsifiers: *"… and to whom if I wish I give it"*. This was invented, he maintains, by the greedy among the rich, who aimed at putting the stamp of divine approval upon their unjustly acquired wealth. The believers criticized by Chrysostom spread their interpretation of the Haggai verse by word of mouth, but various authors, too, referred to it, putting it to all kinds of uses, from serious misrepresentation of the text to more "innocent" ones, all of which this article traces from Chrysostom's time until late in the Empire's existence.
Metadata: Biblical Studies, Bible citations, Patristics, Byzantine Literature, John Chrysostom

Resumen

"*Mía es la plata, y mío es el oro*" (Hageo 2:8). Con estas palabras puestas en boca de Dios, el profeta Hageo pretendía dar ánimos a los judíos, que a su vuelta de la cautividad babilonia planeaban construir un nuevo templo y dudaban si este Segundo templo igualaría al primero en belleza y gloria. Este artículo trata del uso y abuso del mensaje divino en época bizantina, las distintas interpretaciones a las que fue sometido y la diversidad de intenciones con las que se presentaba.

El Padre de la Iglesia Juan Crisóstomo polemizó con algunos de sus fieles sobre el llamamiento egoísta y falso de Hageo 2:8 y sobre la fraudulenta secuela añadida por los falsificadores: "*… y lo daré a quien yo quiera*". Esto fue inventado, defiende, por ricos avarientos que intentaban poner el sello de la aprobación divina sobre su riqueza adquirida injustamente. Los fieles criticados por Crisóstomo difundieron oralmente su interpretación del verso de Hageo, pero también distintos autores se refirieron a él utilizándolo de todos los modos posibles, desde la manipulación grave del texto a otras distorsiones más inocentes. El presente artículo las rastrea desde época de Crisóstomo hasta el final del Imperio.
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MAKING GOD SPEAK TO YOUR ADVANTAGE (HAGGAI 2:8)

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Twice, judging from his works, Church Father and Constantinopolitan Archbishop John Chrysostom had reason to reprimand certain believers who advanced the opinion that riches, any riches, is from God[1]. Chrysostom reports their claim that it is in the Bible, that God has said: *"Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold, and to whom if I wish I shall give it"*, Ἐμὸν τὸ ἀργύριον, καὶ ἐμὸν τὸ χρυσίον, καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν βούλομαι δώσω αὐτό[2]. Chrysostom finds this claim and its interpretation ("any riches is from God") ridiculous, if it were not an improper thing to do, he would laugh sneeringly. People who advocate it are like small children who do not stop at the food of a lavish table, but keep stuffing their mouths. Chrysostom means, evidently, those who, not content with being wealthy, seek also to put the stamp of divine approval upon their riches. Such is his immediate reaction in his 34th homily on the First Epistle to the Corinthians[3]. In another homily, *In illud: Domine, non est in homine*[4], he lashes out even more bitingly: it is the devil's malevolence that drives

[1] I thank the reviewer of the earlier version of this article for the advice to look further than the three authors to whom I had limited my search, John Chrysostom, Anastasius Sinaita and Pseudo-Anastasius. I had done so because the special connection between them described here was known to me from the investigation that led to my dissertation about Pseudo-Anastasius (see note 13). Following the advice has given me much satisfaction, and has resulted in an article, far richer in information than I had thought possible.

[2] All Byzantine authors, except Anastasius Sinaita and Pseudo-Anastasius (see notes 12 and 13), have been consulted in the TLG online (april-may 2015).

[3] *In epistulam I ad Corinthios (homilia 34)*, ed. *PG* 61, 285-295, here 292, l. 64 sqq.

[4] *In illud: Domine, non est in homine,* ed. *PG* 56, 152-162, here 158, l. 1-35.

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these people to misrepresentation of the divine text. What people? This time Chrysostom is explicit: it is the very rich, "who uproot everything, rob widows' houses, maltreat orphans, exalt themselves above the needy".

Chrysostom goes on to criticize the quotation. God's statement *"Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold",* Ἐμὸν τὸ ἀργύριον, καὶ ἐμὸν τὸ χρυσίον, is authentic; it "has been said", εἴρηται, (i.e. is in the Bible); and it has indeed been "said by the prophet", εἰρημένον τῷ προφήτῃ, as a statement from God, the prophet being Haggai (see Haggai 2:8). Not so, however, the words *"and to whom if I wish I shall give it"*, καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν βούλομαι δώσω αὐτό, which Chrysostom repeats a few times, replacing βούλομαι, "I wish", with its synonym θέλω.[5] This clause, he points out, "has not been said", οὐκ εἴρηται (i.e. is not in the Bible); it "has not been added", οὐκέτι πρόσκειται, by the prophet; it is a forgery, inserted "by this riff-raff", … flaunted about "through the stupidity of the rabble", παρὰ τῶν συρφετῶν τούτων ἐπεισενηνεγμένον, … ἐκ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν ἀμαθίας[6]. Chrysostom is right, it *is* an interpolation. Haggai never said such a thing.[7]

Chrysostom puts on a strong case, in the *Homily on 1 Corinthians*, and even more so in *In illud: Domine, non est in homine*. In the former, which discusses 1 Cor 13, his sarcastic picture of the callous behaviour of the greedy stands in most persuasive contrast to his plea for a life in pursuit of love and moderation. The latter homily is different in scope, but equally convincing,

[5] Three times he corrects singular αὐτό, "it", to plural αὐτά, "those" (in *In illud: Domine non est in homine*, 158, l. 8, 11 and 25); once he replaces the future tense δώσω, "I shall give", with present tense δίδωμι, "I give" (*ibid.* l. 11).

[6] For this account of Chrysostom's criticism I combine formulations from both homilies. Further on, I make Pseudo-Anastasius base his criticism on what Chrysostom says in the homily on 1 Cor 13.

[7] The addition does not appear among the variant readings in the *apparatus critici ad locum* of the Ziegler's and Rahlfs' Septuagint editions. Apparently it did not reach the Septuagint manuscript tradition, and it is to be assumed that its distribution was primarily by word of mouth.

having as its subject precisely this: the phenomenon of incorrect, and in cases fraudulent (mis)quoting from the Scriptures. The forged addition to Haggai 2:8 is one of the examples in this homily. It is especially impressive because it treats the scriptural verse in its full context, which is rather rare in the authors I have come across. I shall come back to this further.

Chrysostom was not the first author who recorded the false additon. Cyril of Jerusalem had, some fifty years earlier, included it in his quotation of Haggai 2:8 in *Catecheses ad illuminandos*[8], in slightly different wording: *"Mine are the gold and the silver, and to whomever I wish I give it",* Ἐμόν ἐστι τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον, καὶ ᾧτινι θέλω δίδωμι αὐτό[9]. He does not refer to the context of Haggai's words, and says simply that God said so "through the prophet", διὰ τοῦ προφήτου. Cyril, far from interpreting it as a defence of wealth, deserved and undeserved, sees in it a warning: prosperity, *because* it has been granted by God, must be used well, and shared with the poor. Chrysostom's elder colleague Gregory of Nazianzus, too, seems to accept it for his 45th sermon, *In sanctum pascha*[10]. Like Cyril, he stresses God's gift of riches as a duty to use it well, "well and with salvation in mind", καλῶς καὶ σωτηρίως[11]. Also like Cyril, he refrained from calling attention to the quota-

[8] W.C. Reischl – J. Rupp, *Cyrilli Hierosolymorum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt omnia,* Munich 1:1848, 2:1860 (repr. Hildesheim 1967), Catechesis VIII, ch. 6. These editors recognized the added clause as fraudulent and put it between square brackets. I am inclined to accept it as written by Cyril, because of the tenor of this chapter, which is about personal wealth and the question whether it is from the devil or from God. To prove that the latter is true, Haggai 2:8 is called in. The addition fits very well.

[9] To be precise: Cyril replaces ᾧ, "to whom", with ᾧτινι, "to whomever"; he leaves out ἐὰν, "if'"; instead of δώσω, "I shall give", he writes δίδωμι, "I give", the result being: καὶ ᾧτινι θέλω δίδωμι αὐτό, "*and to whomever I wish I give it*". In the first clause the silver and the gold have changed places: in Cyril's version the gold comes first. All these peculiarities are also to be found in the version that reached Anastasius Sinaita.

[10] *In sanctum Pascha* (oratio 45), ed. *PG* 36, 624-664, here 652, l. 11-19.

[11] I am not at all certain that the addition to Haggai 2:8 in Gregory's text is a falsification such as the one condemned by Chrysostom, or even a falsification. Its syntax differs from that of all other occurrences: "*I shall give it to whom I wish*"; the main clause precedes

tion's context. And where Cyril did refer, however minimally, to the prophet, Gregory was silent about him.

Three centuries after Chrysostom, ca. 700, the monk and priest Anastasius Sinaita wrote his 103 *Quaestiones et Responsiones*[12]. Anastasius' questioner of *Q.* 45 asks: Has everyone who has become rich, become so from God? Is that the meaning of what God has said*: "Mine are the gold and the silver, and to whomever I wish I give it",* Ἐμόν ἐστι τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον, καὶ ᾧτινι θέλω δίδωμι αὐτό? Here the word order in the first, authentic, part, and the word choice in the false ending are as those in Cyril's text (see note 9). Clearly different versions were circulating, of which one had reached Chrysostom's ears, and another those of Cyril and Anastasius.

Unlike Chrysostom Anastasius does not question the authenticity of the second part of the quotation. He reacts to it by interpreting it as God's wish to grant riches only to those who acquire it "by just and sinless means", ἀπὸ δικαίων καὶ ἀναμαρτήτων πόρων. Who does so through wars, thefts, perjuries, robberies, briberies and injustices has amassed it "through the Evil One", διὰ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

A ninth-century Constantinopolitan priest selected 27 Anastasian *quaestiones* and combined them into a new collection of 23 ἐρωταποκρίσεις[13]. He put it into circulation under the name of the original author, whom he knew

the subordinated clause, everywhere else it is the other way round. More telling is the context. Gregory explains to the audience: the riches that your enemies owned was, however wickedly obtained, theirs, because God had conceded it; now the Lord has handed it over to you, therefore it is rightly yours. The addition may well be Gregory's own words, his interpretation of Haggai 2:8, or, rather, the interpretation that he needed for his current message. I find support in the fact that he left it out in the other place where he used Haggai 2:8, his 33rd sermon, although it would have been quite fitting there (see further on).

[12] M. Richard (†) – J.A. Munitiz, *Anastasii Sinaitae Quaestiones et Responsiones* (Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca 59), Turnhout 2006.

[13] D.Tj. Sieswerda, *Pseudo-Anastasius en Anastasius Sinaita, een vergelijking,* PhD Dissertation, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam 2004.

as Abbas Anastasius. This Pseudo-Anastasius revised the model *quaestiones*, many of them considerably. Among those he took over is Abbas Anastasius' *Q.* 45, which became Pseudo-Anastasius' *Q.* 11. He adopts the introducing question, including the Haggai quotation. But unlike his model Abbas Anastasius he objects to the second part, which he, interestingly, has formulated a little differently: instead of *"and to whomever I wish I give it"*, he writes *"and to whom if I wish I shall give it",* καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν θέλω δώσω αὐτό. And in the preceding, authentic, clause the word order has been restored: first the silver, then the gold[14]. The whole is exactly as Chrysostom had written it, and the thought arises that Pseudo-Anastasius based his criticism on that of the Archbishop[15]. Both recognize that the first part, "*Mine is the silver and Mine the gold,*" is biblical. Pseudo-Anastasius notes: εἴρηται, "it has been said" (i.e. it is in the Bible). Chrysostom emphasizes: "I know it has been said", οἶδα εἰρημένον. Of the second part, *"and to whom if I wish I shall give it"*, Pseudo-Anastasius says: οὐ γέγραπται, "it has not been written" (i.e. it is not in the Bible), and continues: "it is an addition by stupid and money-hungry people", τῆς γὰρ ἀφρόνων καὶ φιλαργύρων προσθήκης ἐστὶ τοῦτο. Chrysostom's words are: "it has not been added [by the prophet], but interpolated by this riff-raff", οὐκέτι προσκείμενον [τῷ προφήτῃ], ἀλλὰ παρὰ τῶν συρφετῶν τούτων ἐπεισενηνεγμένον[16].

[14] This was, however, not Pseudo-Anastasius' doing: the apparatus criticus in Munitiz's edition of Anastasius Sinaita's *Quaestiones et Responsiones* proves that it had already been done in one of the predecessors of Pseudo-Anastasius' exemplar.

[15] It stands to reason that John Chrysostom, as Archbishop of Constantinople (397-404), had deposited copies of his works in the patriarchal archives. Pseudo-Anastasius had, as I defend in my dissertation, a position in the patriarchate, and access to the library and the archives. It is not improbable that he was able to consult Chrysostom's works there at first hand.

[16] Here I make Pseudo-Anastasius base himself on what Chrysostom says in the *Homily on 1 Cor*, although there is a strong resemblance also to the wording of the criticism in *In illud: Domine, non est in homine.* Which is, of course, not surprising, the critic being one and the same. The fact that the rendering of the contested clause in the former is more consistent, turned the scale for me.

It takes another four centuries for the forgery to be recorded once more, by a 13th-century metropolitan of Naupactus, John Apocaucus, in a letter[17]. Like Cyril, Gregory and Anastasius he does not appear to doubt it, but unlike them he sees in it no connection with personal riches. I shall describe his letter further on.

Two observations

It seems a small thing: a fraudulent reference to the Scriptures, overlooked by some, and brought to light by other, more discerning authors. If it were all, it would not be worthy of much more than a glance in passing, perhaps a mention in a footnote to a more embracing study of the uses that Bible texts are put to. But in this case two things are remarkable, which make it interesting enough to dwell on. The first concerns the question: Is the addition really unbiblical? The second is the finding that Haggai's words, even when correctly quoted, are open to a large variety of interpretations.

The interpolation is *biblical*

Neither Chrysostom nor Pseudo-Anastasius mentions that the words in question *are* biblical, although not Old-Testamentary, but New-Testamentary, and not divine, but quite the opposite, in fact diabolical. They are in Luke 4:6, where the devil tempts Jesus, showing him all the power and glory of the universe and offering it to him, "because", he says, "it has been handed over to me, and to whom if I wish I give it", ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν θέλω δίδωμι αὐτήν.

Cyril of Jerusalem comes very close: in a supplement to his defence of well-earned and well-used riches he attacks those who object to wealth alto-

[17] N.A. Bees, "Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropoliten von Naupaktos (in Aetoliën)", *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 21 (1971-1974) 57-160, ep. 58.

gether, as coming from the devil. They are themselves influenced by the devil, heretics, who believe the devil when he says "I shall give you all", πάντα σοι δώσω. Here we recognize Matthew 4:9[18]. The believers who brought Haggai 2:8 to the attention of, respectively, Chrysostom and Anastasius Sinaita obviously did not know of the forgery. Neither, apparently, did Anastasius[19]. Chrysostom and in his wake Pseudo-Anastasius spotted it. As to its source, the devil's words in Luke 4:6, the fact itself that they do not mention it needs not necessarily mean that they were not aware of it. Chrysostom, and after him Pseudo-Anastasius, did bring the formulation a little closer to what the devil says in Luke 4:6 (by replacing βούλομαι, "I wish", with its synonym θέλω). But this is not enough to take away the suspicion that they did not realize its provenance. A suspicion which grows stronger when one considers how immensely they would have strengthened their case against the supporters of the fraud by pointing out the enormity, not to say sacrilege, of putting the devil's words into the mouth of God.

The forger himself, of course, knew both things: that he was committing a fraud and that he plundered Luke 4:6 for it. The almost exact correspondence of the insertion and Luke's text leaves no doubt. And he did so for profit, he was a rich man, who sought to justify his wealth, which he probably had amassed by unjust means, just as Anastasius Sinaita said[20].

[18] Catechesis VIII, ch. 7. Cyril even touches on Luke 4:6, when he explains that even the devil cannot lie to the end: instead of "it is mine", ἐμά ἐστιν, he is forced to say "it has been handed over to me", ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται, thus admitting that he has no true ownership, but only temporary possession.

[19] Anastasius Sinaita's statement that riches resulting from unjust means hails from "the Evil One", τοῦ πονηροῦ, could be taken as a hint that he was aware of the fraud and of Luke 4:6 as the text's source. But then the question remains why he did not use this knowledge, if he had it. It would have given him the very weapon to destroy the forger's (or forgers', see next note) pretences. He almost certainly did not know.

[20] Perhaps we have to reckon with forgers (plural): the forgery may have been conceived by different persons at different times and in different places. There are always and everywhere people looking for authoritative justification of bad behaviour.

Different interpretations of Haggai 2:8

The second observation also has as its starting point a question: given that the false addition, whatever one may think of it, still is an interpretation of Haggai 2:8, how was it intended to be understood where we find it quoted correctly, the statement Ἐμὸν τὸ ἀργύριον, καὶ ἐμὸν τὸ χρυσίον, *"Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"* without the contested second clause? For an answer I had a close look at all occurrences of Haggai 2: 8 in all of the literature available in the *TLG*. Here, again, John Chrysostom stands out: after denouncing the added forgery he concentrates on the context of Haggai's words, and on the intended meaning of the prophet Haggai's speech to governor Zorobabel of Judaea and the builders of the Second Temple (that is what Haggai 2:2-9 is). Chrysostom explains: "When the Jews returned from the barbarian land [i.e. from the Babylonian captivity], and prepared to rebuild the Temple, and to restore it to its former dignity — when they were in great distress, with enemies standing on all sides, there being much want, and no provision whatever from wherever in sight, he [the prophet Haggai], wishing to raise them to good hopes, and to prevail upon them to keep confidence in the outcome, says from the mouth of God: *Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold*"[21]. A diligent reading of the Septuagint text reveals that Haggai indeed means to reassure his audience by pointing out God's sole ownership of these precious materials, not as the power to hold on to them until He decides to provide them, but as the *guarantee* that all will be well and justly disposed. *"Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold"* is short for *"Leave the problem of the silver and the gold with Me"*.

Chrysostom is quite clear: if there is anything that can *not* be read into the text, it is a message about the distribution of wealth, let alone personal riches. His indignation at such abuse leads him to two striking comparisons:

[21] Thus in *In illud: Domine, non est in homine.*

it is as if spider webs were woven into an emperor's robe, or counterfeit thread into a purple mantle[22].

Chrysostom's explanation stops there. Which is a pity: it would have been interesting to learn his opinion on the nature of the "*treasures of all the nations*", τὰ ἐκλεκτὰ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, that according to Haggai God promises will arrive (2:7). Will they be material, in keeping with the builders' needs of the moment, or, considering God's insistence on the supreme glory and the peace that He will provide for the Temple (2:7 and 9), immaterial: prayers, wisdom, learning? Chrysostom leaves it unsaid. As, in fact, does the scriptural text.

Authors who treated Haggai 2:8 in context

Of the Byzantine authors whom I have found correctly quoting Haggai 2:8, three could in fact not have done otherwise, being authors of line-by-line commentaries on the Minor Prophets, Haggai among them. Two of these came to the same conclusion as Chrysostom: Haggai's motif was to reassure the Temple builders; one thought differently.

Chrysostom's contemporary Theodore of Mopsuestia and near-contemporary Theodoret of Cyrrhus both begin their interpretation of the passage leading up to Haggai 2:8 with God's exhortation to the Jews, through the prophet, *"Have confidence!"*, Θαρσεῖτε (vs. 5)[23]. They continue their comment by quoting very fully God's exposé of what He intends to do: "*shake the heaven and the earth, sea and dry land, and shake up all the nations*" (vss. 6-7), and then *"the treasures"*, τὰ ἐκλεκτά, of all the nations will arrive. God's intention

[22] In the *Homily on 1 Cor.*

[23] Theodoretus, *Interpretatio in xii prophetas minores,* ed. *PG* 81, 1545-1988, here 1868, l. 30 sqq.; Theodorus, ed. H.N. Sprenger, *Theodori Mopsuesteni commentarius in xii Prophetas* (Göttinger Oriëntforschungen V. Reihe: Biblica et Patristica 1), Wiesbaden 1977, ad Haggai 2:5b-9.

in saying, through Haggai, *"Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"*, is more precisely explained by Theodore: "[God means to say:] do not be worried about the shortage of material [...] I shall make the greatness of this House's honour conspicuous through My care".

Unlike Chrysostom Theodore and Theodoret are explicit about the nature of the treasures pledged by God: they will indeed consist of silver and gold. According to them God has in mind the Gog (Theodoret: the Gog and Magog), who will come to attack Jerusalem, only to destroy themselves. God will take their possessions from them and hand them over to the builders. God's ownership of the silver and the gold justifies this. Theodore and Theodoret make, in their turn, God speak. Theodore: "The silver that is with them, and the gold, and briefly all that is with them, is Mine [...], I shall take it away and hand it over to you". Theodoret: "I do not usurp what belongs to others, but I take back what is Mine. I gave them the wealth out of generosity, but they did not recognize their Benefactor".

A different course is followed by Cyril of Alexandria, who wrote his commentary on the Minor Prophets about the same time as Theodore and Theodoret[24]. One of the most influential defenders of the typological, in his terminology "spiritual" (πνευματικῶς, or νοητῶς) reading of the Old Testament, he viewed the Old Covenant as the prophetic foretelling of the New Covenant, the coming of Christ. Accordingly, when God, through Haggai, speaks of the coming of all the nations with their ἐκλεκτά (to be understood as their spiritual treasures), we are to believe that He refers "to the times of the dwelling among us of our Saviour", εἰς χρόνους τῆς τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐπιδημίας. The builders are not to think the temple "inglorious", ἀκλεᾶ, "because there happens to be a shortage of gold and silver and of the glitter from riches", ὅτι χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου καὶ τῆς ἐκ πλούτου λαμπρότητος ἀμοιρήσει

[24] P.E. Pusey, *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in xii prophetas,* Oxford 1868, repr. Brussels 1965, vol. 2, 264-267.

τυχόν. "Not soulless matter is needed", οὐχ ὕλης ἀψύχου δεῖται, but "spiritual decoration", νοητοῦ εὐκοσμίας. This is what God "implies", ὑπεμφαίνει, in the words *"Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"*. Cyril specifies: God means "true worshippers", γνησίους προσκυνητάς, who will make "my temple, that is the Church, glorious and all-commanding", τὸν ἐμὸν ναόν, τουτέστι τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, εὐκλεᾶ καὶ περιοπτόν[25].

If we are to assume that Cyril read reassurance in Haggai's words, it is directed at the Christian reader, over the heads of the Jewish builders.

One more writer looked deeper into the text of Haggai 2: the 15th-century theologian John Eugenicus. He explains in a letter God's intention to reassure the Jews by saying through Haggai: *"Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"*[26]. With these words God promised the builders in their desperation that they would succeed in restoring the Temple, assuring them that "this House's honour shall exceed [that of] the first [Temple]" (Haggai 2:9). "Which has indeed come true", ὃ δὴ καὶ γέγονε, concludes Eugenicus, adding that "God willing, everything is easily realized", Θεοῦ γὰρ βουλομένου, ῥᾳδίως ἅπαν περαίνεται. Eugenicus' aim was teaching the lesson to be learnt from Haggai 2:8 rather than commenting on it. But he did take the trouble of consulting the scriptural text itself. Incidentally, it appears that he was acquainted with the work of John Chrysostom: he encourages the believers to "listen to the golden and blessed voice of the father of the golden speech and the golden mouth, τοῦ χρυσολόγου καὶ χρυσοστόμου πατρός, who exhorts us to consider none of the temporal goods preferable to the faith in God". Among these "temporal goods" is riches.

[25] In his other great commentary, *Glaphyra in Pentateuchum* (ed. *PG* 69, 9-677), Cyril also refers to Haggai. He quotes 2:8 and 9 together, but this time with less attention to the statement "*Mine is the silver, and Mine the gold*" than to the "glory" and the "peace" that will be brought to the building, in which, he states, "Christ was described", Χριστὸς κατεγράφετο (97, l. 4-12).

[26] S.P. Lampros, Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά, Athens 1912-23, vol. 1, ep. 16, 315-323.

Authors who quoted Haggai 2:8 out of context

A number of Byzantine authors referred to Haggai 2:8 without taking account of its context, without even mentioning its provenance, putting it to a variety of uses.

The faithful owns rightfully. Origen (2nd-3rd century), commenting on 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, centres on Paul's words "all things belong to you", πάντα ὑμῶν ἐστιν (vs. 22), "you" being the community of the faithful[27]. Origen contrasts the faithful believer to the unbeliever, who owns like a thief owns, which is the denial of ownership. The faithful owns rightfully, because he respects God saying "*Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"*. In view of Paul's πάντα, "all things", Origen supposedly has in mind all kinds of "belongings", the correct faith in the first place, but money may well be among them, seeing that he calls in Proverbs 17:6a: "To the faithful belongs the whole world of wealth, to the unfaithful not even a farthing", ἔστι τοῦ πιστοῦ ὅλος ὁ κόσμος τῶν χρημάτων, τοῦ δὲ ἀπίστου οὐδὲ ὀβολός.

Arrogance of heretics. Gregory of Nazianzus has been mentioned above among those who quote Haggai 2:8 with the interpolation added (but see note 11). In his 33rd sermon, *Against the Arians and about himself*, he quotes the verse without it[28]. It would, however, have been quite fitting if he had attached it, considering that he makes his Arian adversary refer to the Haggai verse and boast of his God-given riches. He scoffs at him: "You who say: *'Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold'*, God's words". The rift between Arianism and Orthodoxy is presented here by Gregory as that between living luxuriously and leading a "life of simplicity", βίος ἄσκευος.

[27] E. Klostermann, *Origenes Werke,* vol. 3 (Die Griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller 6), Leipzig 1901, 69-70.

[28] *Contra Arianos et de seipso* (oratio 33), ed. *PG* 36, 213 – 237, here 224, l. 6-35.

What God owns, He has created. In Job 28 Job ponders the properties of earthly phenomena, material and immaterial. The first verses are about the provenance of metals: silver, gold, iron, brass. Julian, bishop of Aeclanum in Italy in the first half of the 5th century, is the author of a commentary on Job[29]. At Job 28:1-3, triggered by the silver and the gold mentioned in the text, he writes that God's statement *"Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"* means that He has *created* them, and by implication everything: "There is no other creator of all that exists", οὐδεὶς τῶν ὄντων ἄλλος δημιουργός. This also means that He has ordained "the use and the usefulness", τὴν χρῆσιν καὶ τὸ χρήσιμον, of "what comes out of the earth", τῶν ἐκ τῆς γῆς, the limits of which are not to be overstepped.

Spiritual merchandise. Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessalonike (12th century) pictures in a sermon[30] the church as a bank, which the believers visit "for spiritual commerce", ἐμπορίας χάριν πνευματικῆς, where the trade is in "spiritual merchandise", ψυχικὸν ἐμπόρευμα, and where the believers deposit their hopes as an "investment", ἐκδανειζόμενον. The archbishop himself, "like a banker", τραπεζίτου δίκην, pays out the interest, τὸν τόκον, for the believer to buy, not the usual valuables, "electron from Sardes" and "Indian gold smuck", but the Kingdom of the Heavens itself, αὐτὴν βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν. The investment, the principal itself, is the property of God, who has said: *"Mine is the gold and Mine is the silver"*. Blurring the image somewhat, Eustathius then calls the interest a "loan", δάνειον, from God, which obliges the believer to spend it in such a way that nothing of it "is wasted", διεκπίπτει εἰς κενόν, i.e. to behave in a responsible Christian way.

[29] D. Hagedorn, *Der Hiobkommentar des Arianers Julianus* (Patristische Texte und Studien 14), Berlin 1973.

[30] S. Schönauer, *Eustathios von Thessalonike. Reden auf die grosse Quadragesima* (Meletemata: Beiträge zur Byzantinistik und neugriechischen Philologie 10), Frankfurt a.M. 2006, Sermon 6.

God determines, not the stars. Michael Glykas, a prolific writer of letters, raises in one of them the subject of predestination, the question whether "all things about us are predestined", προωρισμένα εἰσὶ τὰ καθ'ἡμᾶς πάντα[31]. He defends his view as a Christian that every man is responsible for what befalls him, even slavery is brought about by sin, as is "every other hardship", πᾶσα ἄλλη δυσχέρεια. He attacks predestination as it is proclaimed by those who, like the ancient Greeks, maintain that masters are masters, slaves slaves and wealthy wealthy through the accidental position of constellations like Cancer and Leo. It is God's disposal, who said *"Mine is the silver and Mine the gold"*. Glykas does not make clear if God provides undeserved power and wealth, but seeing that according to him slavery is deserved because of sin, we may assume that in his view God grants prosperity because of virtue.

The two perhaps most peculiar occurrences of Haggai 2:8 in Byzantine writing are the following, the last in my survey.

God's privilege claimed by the devil. Olympiodorus the Deacon of Alexandria, who lived ca. 470-520, is, like Julian of Aeclanum, the author of a commentary on Job[32]. Haggai 2:8 appears in his comment on Job 41:22 (41:30 in non-Septuagint Old Testaments), which is part of a description of the monster Leviathan. Olympiodorus focuses on the "gold of the sea" which according to the text –as he gives it![33]– is heaped upon Leviathan. He presents the beast as

[31] S. Eustratiades, Μιχαὴλ τοῦ Γλυκᾶ. Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας τῆς Θείας Γραφῆς, Athens 1906, § 36.

[32] D. Hagedorn – U. Hagedorn, *Olympiodor, Diakon von Alexandria. Kommentar zu Hiob* (Patristische Texte und Studien 24), Berlin 1984.

[33] Olympiodorus reads πᾶς δὲ χρυσὸς θαλάσσης…, "all the gold of the sea…", as the opening words. This is the accepted Septuagint reading (instead of the "sharp potsherds" of the Hebrew and of post-Septuagint Old Testaments). What is astonishing, and, as far as I can see, unique, is the following ἐπ'αὐτὸν, "upon him" instead of ὑπ'αὐτὸν, "under him", which is the common reading, Septuagint and non-Septuagint. That it is not a slip of his pen, appears from Olympiodorus' paraphrase "(he [the monster Leviathan] falsely pretends) that he is surrounded by all the gold of the world", ὡς πάντα τὸν χρυσὸν τοῦ

laying claim to God's statement *"Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold"*, saying that "they are his property", ἴδια αὐτοῦ εἶναι ταῦτα. Leviathan is then identified as the devil, who, tempting Christ, says: *"These I shall all give you, if you fall down and worship me"*, ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι. This we recognize as the devil's words as given in Matthew 4:9.

Chrysostom, and after him Pseudo-Anastasius, condemned believers for abusing God's words and falsely adding to it. The words of the addition come from the devil, as my investigation has made clear. Olympiodorus attacked the devil himself. And instead of the devil's words put into God's mouth, as they were by the falsifier of the beginning of my story, it is in Olympiodorus' comment the other way round: he makes the devil appropriate God's words.

Incidentally, it is clear why the falsifier (or falsifiers [see note 20]) chose for the version in Luke 4:6: the words as pronounced there by the devil can be taken and applied to anyone who has become rich: "*to whom if I wish I shall give it*". The words as spoken bij the devil in Matthew 4:9 do not lend themselves for such generalization.

"Money is not the problem". John Apocaucus was bishop of Naupactus in the first half of the 13th century. I have saved his contribution for last, because it is in itself fascinating, and because it looks as if with him we have come full circle. In a letter to his friend Euthymius Tornikes the bishop declares to be worried about the delay in the building of the episcopal church, for which he is responsible[34]. Which brings to mind Haggai's interlocutor governor Zorobabel, who felt the same about the Second Temple. Of course, differences are great. The building of Zorobabel's temple had not even begun, while Apocaucus' church was already standing, be it "unfinished", ἀτελής. And while the Jews, returning from Babylon, had been reduced to abject pov-

κόσμου περιβεβλημένος, where Olympiodorus notes that "the sea" must be taken to mean "the world" (θαλάσσης…· ὁ κόσμος ἐκλαμβάνεται, "the sea …: the world is meant").

[34] See note 17.

erty, Apocaucus lived in relative comfort (notwithstanding the damage done to the Empire by the Fourth Crusade[35]). But there is also a striking similarity. For the Jewish builders the silver and the gold stood for the completion of the Temple's construction, the decoration, which would establish its glory. Apocaucus faces precisely that task, of putting the final touches to his building project. He specifies: the porches of the church still need new planed stones for pillars and for the floor. So, when calling on Euthymius, apparently a man of influence, to send workers, he specially asks for a sculptor.

Apocaucus' situation is not desperate, as the Jewish builders thought theirs to be, but his case is urgent nevertheless. He is old, death is near, his "passing on to that realm is imminent", ἡ διάβασις ἐκεῖθεν παρὰ πόδας. Obviously the work must be undertaken soon, or it will be too late. He points out that money is no problem: "I have enough money", χρημάτων εὐπορῶ. It is at this point that he calls in Haggai: "The giver of the gold will be He who says: *'Mine is the gold and Mine is the silver',* δώσει δὲ χρυσίον ὁ λέγων· ἐμόν ἐστι τὸ χρυσίον καὶ ἐμόν ἐστι τὸ ἀργύριον." Surprisingly, he adds a variant of the fraudulent phrase that angered Chrysostom so much: "*…and to whom I wish I give it*", …καὶ ᾧ θέλω δίδωμι τοῦτο. Surprisingly, because no personal gain is involved. Apocaucus' aim was to serve the common good, and, more specifically, to "worship the All-praised", δουλεῦσαι τῇ Πανυμνήτῳ, the Mother of God, the patroness of his church. He must have been confident that precisely because of the benevolent character of his effort he would be among God's beneficiaries, and the necessary means would be forthcoming. To his mind the addition was perfectly fitting, fully in keeping with the foregoing *"Mine is the gold and Mine is the silver"*, and with his own intentions.

[35] Naupactus, part of the independent Despotate of Epirus, enjoyed freedom from the Byzantine rulers in Nicaea as well as from the Latins in Constantinople. As important harbour, it prospered. Its bishop presided over the regional synod.

Summing up

Of the six authors whom I have found recording the forged attachment to Haggai 2:8, only one, John Apocaucus, claims the advantage it implies, and he does so not for himself, but for the good of the community. Three, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzus and Anastasius Sinaita append a reservation: riches as a favour from God means that it is to be shared. The two remaining authors, John Chrysostom and his follower Pseudo-Anastasius, put it in writing only to reject it, accusing others to have invented it for personal profit.

Such a small number of occurrences in the thousands of pages of Byzantine writing available through the *TLG* would seem to suggest a limited impact of the forgery. If that is the case, Chrysostom and Pseudo-Anastasius could have saved their breath, a shrug of the shoulders would have sufficed. But beside the fact that their angry reaction betrays a real concern, there is the fact of its evident persistence, even if it was by word of mouth. It must have been circulating before Cyril of Jerusalem wrote it down, in the mid-fourth century, and it was still going round in the 13th century, when John Apocaucus reached for it. It is safe to assume that the forgery did not stop there.[36]

[36] A curious recent reappearance occurs in an internet website of the type "blog", called "Gabriel's Message". The blogger professes to be interested in the orthodox tradition, and hosts discussions on theological and moral issues. A message of 11 July 2011 by a contributor called "Nicholas" is about money, and is headed "Use it well, and there is no fault to be found with money". This is from Cyril of Jerusalem's Catechesis VIII, ch. 6. "Nicholas" quotes ch. 6 and the beginning of ch. 7, i.e. Cyril's defence of well-used riches, and the beginning of his attack on the heretics who curse possessions and money. When "Nicholas" comes to the words "The gold is Mine, and the silver is Mine, and to whomsoever I will I give it", he mentions Luke 4:6 as well as Haggai 2:8, either overlooking or disregarding the fact that it is the devil who utters the second clause in Luke 4:6. Whichever, the effect is the same as that produced by "Nicholas'" medieval predecessors: the devil's words are put into the mouth of God. And just like these predecessors "Nicholas" disregards the context of Haggai 2:8, where the divine statement "*Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold*" has nothing to do with money and personal riches, but is brought in to reassure worried workmen, who fear that the work of their hands will be in vain.

It is the concept of scriptural unity and consistency that motivated the commentators Theodore and Theodoret in linking Haggai's words to Ezekiel's foretelling, also from the mouth of God, of the Gog and Magog (or Gog *of* Magog) invasion (Ezekiel 38-39). One step further, the New Testament conceived as the fulfillment of the Old Testament, made Cyril of Alexandria hear in Haggai's speech a prediction of Christianity. And, more in general, the significance for Christians of the Old Testament is elementary in John Eugenicus' conclusion that God kept His promise, the Temple was restored: God willing, everything is arranged.

Returning, for the moment, to the forgery: instead of saying that Haggai 2:8 was stripped of its context, one could maintain that it was fitted with a new context, the addition and its implications. The same goes for the cases I have grouped together as quotations out of context without the addition. In some of these cases new contexts have been provided that are actually not very different from the one intended by the supporters of the fraud: the Arian in Gregory's sermon defends his luxury by referring to Haggai 2:8, the Leviathan in Olympiodorus' commentary on Job does the same, making it even worse by taking God's words into its own devilish mouth. Other users rely on it to support a point of theology: Origen to declare that the true believer is also a true owner, Julian of Aeclanum to affirm that God is Creator, and Michael Glykas to underline God's determination in assigning to everyone his place in society. Eustathius' allegory of the church as a bank, with God as the Director-general presiding over its capital, and the bishop as the local manager, is undoubtedly the most original of this series.

Looking back on the wide variety of entries I have dealt with, I give a special salute to John Chrysostom, in admiration of his passion in exposing deceit and defending truthfulness, in combination with calm and levelheaded analysis.