

Pillar Passage – Haggai 2 pt 2 (v. 10-15)
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Is the, in a nut shell, can a person, by keeping the law, make themselves holy? By coming close to God? By coming into contact with God? By keeping the law? The answer is, no.

Second question: Can a person make themselves unclean, and could God, in such a way, make Himself unclean by coming into contact with them? Yes.

Can you make yourself unclean unrighteous by the law? The answer is, yes.

That sounds like bad news. But keep reading. “Now then, consider from this day onward. Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the Lord, how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures there were but twenty. I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to Me, declares the Lord.”

Then they did. Then they did believe God after that. So God says, verse 18, “Consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the Lord’s temple was laid ...” That was the act by which they did demonstrate faith in the Lord; that they turned from their own homes—from putting up wood paneling in their own homes—and worked at the worship of God. From *that* moment God says, “Is the seed yet in the barn? Indeed, the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have yielded nothing. But from *this* day on, I *will* bless you.” And it is not because they are righteous. They are still unclean.

They are still unclean before God, and yet with this entire scenario pictures is a wonderful—wonderous—feature at the heart of the gospel. That is: in a fallen world where no one is righteous, no not one (Rom 3). No one is righteous, no not one—not even Father Abraham—but as we saw with Abraham and a Paul talks about in Roman 4; what God does in a fallen world, is that He *exchanges* righteousness with faith.

Abraham believed God and it was *counted*, or credited, to him *as* righteousness.

That has always been. The father of Israel, Abraham ... That has always been the way that God wants His people to relate to Him; by exchanges righteousness with faith.

Now, how can God be just in that? That is essentially Paul’s argument in Romans 3 and Romans 4. I invite you to go there now and see what I mean.