

Haggai 2:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying,

Analysis

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law (כֹּהֵן תֹּרָה אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים שְׁאַל־נָא יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אָמַר YHWH Tzeva'ot she'al-na et-hakohanim torah)—God commands Haggai to **ask** (שָׁאַל/sha'al) the **priests** (כֹּהֲנִים/kohanim) concerning **the law** (תּוֹרָה/torah). The priests were responsible for teaching God's law, particularly regulations about clean and unclean (Leviticus 10:10-11, Deuteronomy 33:10, Malachi 2:7). God uses their expertise to establish a theological principle about holiness and defilement.

This pedagogical approach—asking questions to elicit knowledge—engages the learner actively rather than merely receiving information passively. Jesus frequently used this Socratic method (Matthew 21:23-27, 22:41-46), forcing His audience to think, reason, and draw conclusions. Here, God establishes the principle through the priests' own theological knowledge, making the application in verse 14 undeniable.

Historical Context

The priests had returned from exile and reestablished sacrificial worship even before the temple was rebuilt (Ezra 3:2-6). They functioned as teachers of the law, answering questions about ritual purity, sacrificial procedures, and covenant obedience. Haggai's public questioning served to refresh the community's understanding of fundamental holiness principles that had implications for their temple-building project and their covenant relationship with God.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does God use teachers, pastors, and biblical instruction to shape your understanding of holiness and righteousness?
2. What role does asking questions—both receiving and asking them—play in spiritual growth and theological understanding?
3. How do you engage actively with Scripture and teaching rather than passively consuming information?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	לֵאמֹר:	יְהוָה	צְבָא וְ	שָׂאֵל	נָ א	אֶת	הַכֹּהֲנִים
H3541	Thus saith	the LORD	of hosts	Ask	H4994	H853	now the priests
	H559	H3068	H6635	H7592			H3548
תּוֹךְ הַ	לֵאמֹר:						
concerning the law	Thus saith						
H8451	H559						

Additional Cross-References

Malachi 2:7 (Word): For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.