

Haggai Chapter 1 A New Years Eve Encouragement and Challenge.

*1*In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, *2*“Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘This people says, “The time has not come, even the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.”’” *3*Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, *4*“Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?” *5*Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways! *6*“You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes.”

*7*Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways! *8*“Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the LORD. *9*“You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?” declares the LORD of hosts, “Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house. *10*“Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. *11*“I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands.”

*12*Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people showed reverence for the LORD. *13*Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke by the commission of the LORD to the people saying, “ ‘I am with you,’ declares the LORD.” *14*So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts,

their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king.

Haggai is the 2nd shortest book in the O. T. But Oh my! what a message for us! The underlying principles here apply to us, no less than to these Jews.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are all prophets in Judah after the 70 year captivity in Babylon. Judah was taken captive and removed to Babylon for 70 years because of their sin and unfaithfulness.

So what we have in this little section is some drama that took place after the people were returned home to rebuild their temple. You'll recall they had letters from Artaxerxes ordering them to do just that. This is about 536BC.

Ezra 3:10 - 4:8

10) And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph with cymbals to praise the Lord according to the directions of David King of Israel. 11) And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord. "for He is good and His steadfast love endures forever toward Israel." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. 12) But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, 13) so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the peoples weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.

Old guys! Makes me laugh because I understand it far too well. We all draw from that fountain of past experience. The old one was BETTER!! The younger folk didn't know what they had missed in the glory of the previous house. Be patient with us old folk. Both young and old had a heart for God's glory, they just were viewing the thing from different

directions.

4:1) Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the Lord, the God of Israel, 2) they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers houses and said to them, "Let us build with you for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to Him ever since the days of Essarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here."

Here comes the devil with an offer of assistance. We have to fall for this every time now-a-days because it's "politically correct". Oh, just bend your belief system a tiny bit. Don't be so rigid and exclusive. It isn't loving! We're all working for the same goal after all aren't we. Let satan's group come along side of you and just wait for your righteousness to rub off on them. Indeed, the wise Governor knows full well that it works the other way around.

3) But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers houses in Israel said to them; You have nothing to do with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the Lord, the God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us. 4) Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build, and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purposes all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even to the reign of Darius, king of Persia.

You can read the rest of the story, how letters of accusation of treason were written and ultimately in vs 23 of ch 4;

Then when the copy of king Artexerxes letter was read before Rehum and Shimshai, the scribe, and their associates, they went in haste to the Jews at Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease. Then the work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem stopped, and it ceased until the second year of Darius king of Persia.

So the temple rebuilding was stalled for 16 long years from 536BC to 520 BC. - Why?

This is a sovereign act of God, not Artexerxes. God can handle Artexerxes.

Good people make good plans.....and a door slams shut. Why is that? We see it here at our church. We may see it in the months ahead.

God is at work in it all. When He sovereignly makes things happen - I get excited - good or bad, I love to see HIM moving amongst his people.

HAGGAI 1a)

In the second year of Darius the king, in the 6th month on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet

God speaks to his people. Different ages - different ways.

In the O. T. the office of prophet trumped the office of King. More important! They were the direct link to the words from the mouth of God.

In the church age - no new revelation - but God still speaks to us through his book - and he gives certain gifted men to the church universal that would trump a U. S. president. ANY DAY! What John Piper or John MacArthur (and thousands of other godly men) might say is a 1,000 times weightier than what even a good president might say if they are speaking from the word of God with Holy Spirit power.

1b) to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Governor of Judah

The prophecy is the Word of God, by Haggai to Zerubbabel. He is in the line of David, but there will be no more kings in Judah until the King of Kings arrives. He is Governor.

1c) and to Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

His lineage can be traced to Aaron through Zadok. God's people returned

unharméd, but changed.

vs2) Thus says the Lord of hosts....

After the exile, this description of God becomes much more prevalent. It means "*The Lord of armies*".

SIDEBAR: Lord of Armies;

2Kings 6:17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha

Isa 37:36 And the angel of the LORD went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. 1 angel wipes out

185,000 men. The Lord of ARMIES. Spiritual armies and earthly armies.

They all answer to HIM.

So some armed troops with a letter from Artaxerxes forced a halt to temple

construction sixteen years ago? Thus says the Lord of Armies;

2b) These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord" 3) Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet.....

Vss 4-6 are the heart of the passage. Extremely interesting - and telling - to us today.

4-6) Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies in ruins? Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways (Let's talk about this) you have sown much and harvested little. You eat but you never have enough. You drink but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a purse with holes.

"Is it a time..." TIME is a 4 letter word.

Time to fix up (panel) their house

Time for crops

Time to Eat

Time to Drink

Time to clothe

Time to make wages

NO time to glorify God.

Now therefore, consider your ways (let's talk about this)

You have;

Sown much - Harvested little

You eat - but don't get full

You Drink - but you never have your "fill"

You clothe yourselves - but no one is warm

He who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

You keep putting them in and when you go to look for them, they're gone.

All leaked out. Lost.

Is this a prosperity gospel? Is God a genie? If you rub his pot by building His house does the curse of 4 - 6 get reversed?

NO!!

Look at us. Our dispensation, our generation, we're the church, not Israel,
we're the Nations, yet so little has changed from this picture.

Any one who put us (evangelical USA) under a microscope would see a picture identical to what God addresses with His people here.

Our minds - our hearts - our emotional core - body soul spirit - define it how you will - are inextricably tied to the things of this world.

We sow (fill in the %) is it 95%, 98%, 99.98%? to reap a crop from THIS world. Under that microscope, we don't look any different than Isreal of 2530 years ago.

This life is all you get! Every preferance is in that pursuit. Every decision -
You sow - ? For what?? The Golden years?? Do you check up on your retirement account weekly? Daily? Is that the harvest you're working for?
That's all the world has!!!

Why do we look JUST LIKE THEM?!?

We make sure our house is comfy
We sow - far too much - to a harvest that won't come
We eat.....and eat.....and eat..... - makes us fat, not full
We drink - but we're still thirsty
We put on clothes - but we're still naked
We work for wages - workin' for those golden years - that's all there is
- but the bag of money had a hole in it didn't it!

There is no fullfillment of longing. Something in my gut is empty!
SOW SOW SOW SOW
EAT EAT EAT EAT
DRINK DRINK DRINK DRINK
WORK WORK WORK WORK!!

It's still empty! Why??

C. S. Lewis said;
If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

*VS 7)Thus says the Lord of armies..."consider your ways" (let's talk about this)
Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house,
that I may take pleasure in it, and that*

I MAY BE GLORIFIED,

says the Lord.

There is a connection there. God's glory = my satisfaction. This is all new to me - after 40 years!

God lives in infinite inexpressable joy. He created us to Glorify Him with every breath and live in that JOY with Him.

From one end of the Bible to the other;

GLORIFY ME. GLORIFY ME.

Is God egomaniacal?? NO! - It turns out that's where the joy is. That's where the fullness is. When we join God in what He's doing - in this case rebuilding a temple instead of self absorption - we glorify Him and the by product is JOY!

He's constantly trying to move us deeper in our worship - glory relationship - NOT because He needs us - but because WE NEED HIM.

*vss 9-11 are crystal clear. No exegesis needed.
You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the Lord of Hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house. 10) Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld it's produce. And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills. On the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast, and on all their labors.*

Look around you. What do you see. Stand outside and look in. Is Tonopah Community Church in drought mode?

What is it that God wants us to join Him in? Or is drought good enough.

Is throwing \$\$\$ into a bag with holes in it good enough. Is running on - empty - good enough?

*vss 12 - 15) Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people OBEYED the voice of the Lord their God, and the voice of Haggai the prophet as the Lord their God had sent him. And the people feared the Lord. 13) **Then** Haggai the messenger of the Lord spoke to the people with the Lord's message; "I am with you!" declares the Lord. 14) And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of ALL the remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, on the 24th day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.*

The response of the people of Judah to the word of God!

Vs. 12 They obeyed. There is repentance comingled in that word. You stop building your house and start building God's house by way of repentance and obedience. They obeyed.

They Feared. Reverance. Before this word from Haggai, they had all but forgotten God. Workin on their stuff. God? God who? Oh him? After the word of God had worked repentance, they reveared God!

Vs. 13 "I am with you"

I AM WITH YOU!

That's all I want to hear! I want God to raise the roof right off this building with that shout. That's what we want! God to say "I am with you". It doesn't get any better than that.

But it get's even better; Then the Lord stirred up the spirit of

1. Zerubbabel
2. Joshua
3. ALL the remnant.

This side of heaven it just doesn't get any better than that. When God's spirit is co-mingled with his peoples spirits in a project or task that brings Him glorythe joy just comes flooding in.

And they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, on the 24th day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

Cast off the empty world.

What would God have us to build together with Him?

Seek His face. Obey His message. Fear Him. Pray for God to stir up our spirits right here in Tonopah Nevada.