

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to Haggai 2

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through Haggai

Haggai was a prophet – who God used to bring a word of correction to His people.

They had stopped the word that He had called them to do.

Their priorities were all wrong.

They were so self-focused and not focused on the things that God had for them to do.

God and His will was no longer their top priority.

And over the last two weeks – we have seen the Haggai was obedient to what the Lord called him to do.

God gave Haggai a word of correction for the people of Judah, God told them that He was correcting them / that they were missing out on the blessings of the Lord

the people responded – with obedience.

After some 16-17 years of being idle, the people went back to work in reconstructing the temple.

They went back to doing God's will.

However, that is not the end of the story –

The focus of chapter 1 is on getting the people to do the right thing –

However, we will see in our text this evening - that Haggai brings another word of exhortation to the people.

This time – the change is not on whether they are doing the right thing or whether their priorities are right, this time, the exhortation is on changing their hearts.

You see, when a word of correction comes to our lives – we can do the right things for a season, however, we go back to doing the same thing we were doing before.

God wants us to have a change of heart to go along with doing His will.

Let's pray...

**[Hag 2:1-23 NKJV] 1 In the seventh [month], on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: 2 "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: 3 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, [is this] not in your eyes as nothing?**

So, this word of exhortation comes about 1 month after the people went back to work on the temple.

Keep in mind that the Jews were in captivity for 70 years – when they were taken captive, the temple was completely destroyed.

and then you had another 16-17 years where no work was done on the temple.

So within the remnant – there were a few people that were around before the temple was destroyed.

They saw the foundation laid down of the new temple – and they were discouraged because in their eyes, it looks like nothing compared to the original temple.

**[Ezr 3:12-13 NKJV] 12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' [houses], old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.**

This older generation had a longing for the good old days.

They were not as excited about the new temple.

They couldn't duplicate what they had seen as children,

They couldn't duplicate what they had felt as children.

I remember the first time I went to the Pima County Fair –

I thought it was a dump. Why?

Because my frame of reference was LA County Fair, Orange County Fair

However, my girls, they enjoyed it because that is the only frame of reference they had.

Here is another example –

For most of us, we would say, my mom or my grandmother made the best tamales when I was growing up.

Again – frame of reference.

That experience will never be duplicated – because we are no longer children.

Those will always be memories that will be lodged inside our head.

Now imagine that feeling ramped up because now we are dealing with the spiritual.

“This temple will never be as glorious as Solomon’s temple”

The older generation was falling into the temptation of longing for something of a different era.

By the way – we do the same thing.

Oh how I wish God was moving today in the same way He moved during the Jesus Movement of the 70’s and 80’s

Or we begin to ask, “Where are all the great preachers – where are the Billy Graham’s”, the Wesleys, the Spurgeons

Where are all the church missionaries?

We begin to look back at spiritual experiences that we once had, the joys that we once had – and we have a tendency to say, “It will never be as good”

But the truth is – that is not true.

God continues to work and He continues to work and move in ways that we least expect – so we don’t want to always be looking back and longing for the old days.

Zech 4:10 –

**For who has despised the day of small things?**

The NLT uses the phrase small beginnings

God accepts our little works if they are done in faith.

The enemy likes to take our attention from the now and focus on the path or the future.

We need to be into what God is doing now – even the small things.

This is the word that God is bring to the leaders and the people –

“You though the 1<sup>st</sup> temple was great – check out what I am going to do with this one”

4 'Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the LORD; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the LORD, 'and work; for I [am] with you,' says the LORD of hosts. 5 '[According to] the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, **so My Spirit remains among you**; do not fear!'

What is the solution to discouragement?

Instead of sitting around and thinking about the good old days – God tells them – Be strong and get to work!

The temple is going to get built not only with their hands – but God is reminding them of the promise He made to their forefathers.

Back in Deuteronomy 31:6

and

Back in Joshua

**[Jos 1:5 NKJV] 5 “No man shall [be able to] stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, [so] I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.**

God also promises them that His Spirit will remain among them.

By the way – this promise that He is making to the people of Judah is the same promise He makes to you and me.

Be strong, remember my promises and be filled with My Spirit

This is how we get things done

This is how the work of God takes place in our lives

Turn to Zech 4 – to the right a few pages

Again, Zech was another prophet that was sent during the same time – he speaks about the same issue.

**[Zec 4:6-9 NKJV] 6 So he answered and said to me: "This [is] the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts. 7 'Who [are] you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel [you shall become] a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' " 8 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish [it]. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.**

The rebuilding of the temple was not going to get done by human strength or ability – it was going to be done by His Spirit.

And here is the thing church –

Every work we do for the Lord, there is always going to be that temptation to do it in our own strength

And we could prepare ourselves, read books and take courses but eventually, we will burn ourselves out.

The work of the Lord must not be done in human wisdom – it needs to be done by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul in his letter to the churches in Galatia -

**[Gal 3:2-3 NKJV] 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?**

This applies to our own walk in Christ

This applies to our church as a whole – everything we do here.

And it is a prayer I pray for our fellowship.

Because there is a tendency to begin to rely on human ingenuity, human strength, human wisdom and we will cease relying on God

We need to understand that the work of God is always done by His Spirit



Before His ascension –

Jesus told His disciples the following

**[Act 1:8 NKJV] 8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”**

It is easy for us today to forget that it is the Lord who does the work.

And it is easy for us today to forget that He is with us and will not forsake us.

**6 "For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more (it [is] a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 'and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 8 'The silver [is] Mine, and the gold [is] Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 9 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."**

What God is saying here is that this temple is going to be greater than the first temple and the reason that it is going to be greater is because the Desire of Nations is going to come.

Now, keep in mind that in this temple – once it was completed – there was no Ark of the Covenant – it went missing.

If you read Ezekiel 10 – it actually tells us that as the temple was being destroyed – God's glory leaves the temple.

No Ark of the Covenant, meant no shekinah glory in the temple.

God met His people on the Mercy Seat – but there is no Ark of the Covenant

So God's glory was not in the temple

For 400 years – God's glory was absent

Until – Luke 2 –

**[Luk 2:9 NKJV] 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.**

That is the first mention of the glory of God – that is the same glory that filled the first temple

And then Jesus is presented in the temple

Jesus Himself is the glory of God that walks into this temple

God is saying, "You guys are despising the small things – this temple, but the presence of God is coming – but it is not going to be in a cloud this time – it is coming in flesh.

Now regarding the shaking at the beginning of verse 6 –

Haggai is referencing the 1<sup>st</sup> coming of Christ – about the glory returning to the temple

And he is also referencing the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ –

We looked at this back when we studied Hebrews 12 – about this shaking that is going to take place in heaven and in earth

Everything man made is going to come tumbling down.

And God will bring in things that will remain.

The same can be said about anything we do in the flesh.

The interesting thing about the second temple is that Herod renovates the temple – he set out to make it greater than Solomon's temple – and by the time the renovations were done – it was destroyed by Rome.

A great shaking brought it down – it was man made

Herod didn't make the temple greater – Jesus walking in – made it greater,

**10 On the twenty-fourth [day] of the ninth [month], in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 11 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Now, ask the priests [concerning the] law, saying, 12 "If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?" ' " Then the priests answered and said, "No." 13 And Haggai said, "If [one who is] unclean [because] of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?" So the priests**

answered and said, "It shall be unclean." 14 Then Haggai answered and said, " 'So is this people, and so is this nation before Me,' says the LORD, 'and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.

This is a question for the priests.

The priests were given portions of meat from some of the sacrifices as a payment for their work in performing the sacrifices. Because this meat came from sacrifices, it was considered "holy".

But there was a requirement of just who could eat it. It could only be eaten by priests or their families, and there was one further requirement:

**(Leviticus 6:27a NKJV) Everyone who touches its flesh must be holy.**

So Haggai's question for the priests is – if they were carrying their meat in their pockets or backpacks and the meat touched something else – would holiness be transferred to whatever it touched.

He deals with the whole being ceremoniously clean and unclean

And the point that is being made here is that the work of someone who is unclean can never make something clean.

The work of someone who is holy can never make someone else holy

So I can't make you holy

But you can make me unclean

And you can't make me holy

But I can make you unclean

A sick man can't be made well by hanging out with a healthy man

But a healthy man can certainly be made sick by hanging out with the sick

That is why Paul tells us to not be unequally yoked.

This is the point -

Even though the people were bringing sacrifices, even sacrifices for their sins, there sacrifices were "unclean" because the people were not changing their behavior.

We cannot have a heart that is distant from God and think that God is going to be honored by the sacrifices that we bring to Him.

What God wants is someone who really loves Him and really cares for Him

That is why over and over again in scripture – we see the issue of having our hearts right before the Lord

It always has to start with the heart.

It cannot be where we are simply doing the outwardly churchy thing – going through the motions.

It needs to be a real life, real relationship with Jesus

**15 'And now, carefully consider from this day forward: from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the LORD-- 16 'since those [days], when [one] came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were [but] ten; when [one] came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were [but] twenty. 17 'I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands; yet you did not [turn] to Me,' says the LORD. 18 'Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid--consider it: 19 'Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded [fruit]. [But] from this day I will bless [you].' "**

Before they started work on the temple – God tells them – I was not blessing you.

I was trying to get your attention.

But He reminds them that if they are obedient and walk with a change heart – that He will take care of them

**20 And again the word of the LORD came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, 21 "Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying: 'I will shake heaven and earth. 22 I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots And**

those who ride in them; The horses and their riders shall come down, Every one by the sword of his brother. 23 'In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,' says the LORD, 'and will make you **like a signet [ring]; for I have chosen you,**' says the LORD of hosts."

Turn to Jeremiah 22

Coniah or Jaconiah was the king of Judah when Babylon conquered Jerusalem

And like many of the kings – he was an evil king

**[Jer 22:24-25 NKJV] 24 "[As] I live," says the LORD, "though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet on My right hand, yet I would pluck you off; 25 "and I will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand [of those] whose face you fear--the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of the Chaldeans.**

**[Jer 22:30 NKJV] 30 Thus says the LORD: 'Write this man down as childless, A man [who] shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.'** "

This curse was pretty much the end of the line of David in the Old Testament

Satan had gotten the descendants of David to sin against God in such a way that God said – that's it.

No descendant of Coniah will ever be king of Judah

God plucked Coniah off His hands

But God chose Zerubbabel and made him into a signet ring

He would lead the effort to build and complete the Temple in Jerusalem.

His offspring, the Messiah will one day shake up all the kingdoms of the world.

Being God's "signet ring", he would "impress", or leave God's "mark" on the world.

You know what is the best part –

We too have been chosen by God

To leave a mark on the world around us – just like Zerubbabel.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.



Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

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