

# THE PROPHECY OF HAGGAI

BIBLE TEXT : Haggai 1:1-15; 2:1-23.

LESSON 427 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Corinthians 3:16). .

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

### Haggai 1:1-15

1 In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of

Josedech, the high priest, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.

3 Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

4 *Is it* time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house *lie* waste?

5 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

6 Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag with holes.

7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

8 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

9 Ye looked for much, and, lo, *it came* to little; and when ye brought *it* home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that *is* waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

10 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **The Temple of God**

In the two short chapters of the Book of Haggai are written four sermons. Haggai preached them to the Jews who were living in Jerusalem more than 500 years before Jesus was born, but God had them recorded in the Bible for our benefit, too. Haggai may not have had even a pulpit from which to speak, because the Temple that had been started with a good foundation about sixteen years before, when the Jews first returned from Babylonian captivity, had been left unfinished.

What about the spiritual foundation that God laid in your heart when you were saved? Have you continued to build? Or has the temple of your heart been left unfinished?

Years before in this same place where Haggai was preaching, Solomon's costly Temple had been built with such perfectly fitted stones, timbers and gold that not a sound of hammer was heard as the Temple was erected. When the Temple was finished and dedicated, God showed His pleasure by sending His Holy Spirit like a cloud in the midst of the worshipers. The priests and musicians were not able to minister, because of the glory of God.

#### **Captivity and Return**

As time went on God's people sinned. They served idols instead of the living God. They refused to pay attention to the prophets whom God sent to reprove and correct them. They went on in their sins until God permitted them to be taken into captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar and their beautiful Temple was destroyed.

After 70 years, according to God's Word, the Persian King Cyrus had issued a decree, or order, that those whose spirit God had stirred up should go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. They got timbers from Lebanon and laid the foundation, but right away their enemies came and caused them to stop. Then they quit trying. They did not quit working, but instead of working for the Lord they worked for themselves.

They worked hard building beautiful homes. They planted gardens and vineyards for themselves, but nothing for the Lord.

#### **God's Displeasure**

God saw this and was not pleased. So it came to pass that though they worked early and late to cultivate the ground, the crops were small. Their grape vineyards bore only a little. The ground was parched and dry because there was no rain. Their flocks did not produce enough wool for their clothing. They worked hard but it seemed there was never enough for them and their families.

God wanted to help the Israelites, so He sent Haggai to tell them just why they were in trouble. God said it was because they had let the enemy hinder them. The message was, "**Consider your ways.**" Think about how you are living. They had time and money to build houses of their own, but no time to build the house of God; therefore God had withheld the rain.

Sometimes there is no rain in parts of our country. The ground is dry and the crops are small. But how many people consider that

is stayed *from* her fruit.

11 And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon *that* which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, 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 did fear before the LORD.

13 Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I *am* with you, saith 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 Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

15 In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

### **Haggai 2:1-23**

1 In the seventh *month*, in the one and twentieth *day* of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai, saying,

2 Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying,

3 Who *is* left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? *is it* not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?

4 Yet now be strong, O

it may be because of the sins of the people.

Have you quit resisting the devil and let your zeal for reading the Bible, for attending church and praying at the altar grow cold? Consider. Has the blessing of God gone from your life?

### **Action**

When Haggai preached to these people in Jerusalem they believed it was a message from God and not the word of a man only. The fear of God was in their heart and Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the priest, and all the people went back to building the Temple, and God was with them.

When you hear your minister preach, do you open your heart and let God talk to you? (**1 Thessalonians 2:13** <sup>13</sup> For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it not as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.).

As the walls were built higher and the material to complete the Temple was gathered, God saw that some of the older men who had seen Solomon's Temple in its glory were sad because this Temple was as nothing in comparison.

### **Encouragement**

So God sent a message of encouragement. He said, "Be strong" to continue and finish this good work of building the house of God because "I am with you." That is our highest aim today --- that God will be with us and be pleased to dwell in our churches. And He will if we, the members, are humble and obedient, for God says in Isaiah 57:15: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

Then God made a statement that must have been a mystery to many who heard it: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace." Their Temple was not greater than Solomon's Temple in costly materials -- stones, timbers and gold. But the prophet, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was looking far into the distance, beyond the time when Jesus was to come as a Babe in the manger of Bethlehem, on to the time when He would come again to set up His earthly kingdom in a truly grander Temple, one that is yet to be built in Jerusalem.

"And in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts." Jesus is coming this second time as the Prince of Peace to reign a thousand years upon the earth. In order to have a part in Jesus' kingdom of a thousand years of peace we must be careful to build and guard the temple of our heart now. That is our building project today, and the Word is the same, "Be strong, and work."

### **Hindrance**

At this very time when Zerubbabel and Joshua and all the people were busy building the house of God, enemies came again to try to stop the work (Ezra 5). So it is when you are intent on building for God, the enemy will come to you. He may come in the form of a friend or even someone of your family who will say, "It isn't important that you attend church as often as you do." When you do go to church, the enemy himself may whisper in your ear, "Don't pray tonight; your friend is waiting for you." If you listen, the temple of your heart is neglected.

God wants to stir our heart to keep on building, and He will if we listen to the preaching of the Word of God.

### **The Contagion of Sin**

In the third message, God told Haggai to ask the priests concerning the Law of Moses, if the skirt of a priest who is sanctified touches the meat offering of fine flour and oil or an

Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I *am* with you, saith the LORD of hosts:

5 *According to* the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

6 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it *is* a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry *land*;

7 And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

8 The silver *is* mine, and the gold *is* mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

9 The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

10 In the four and twentieth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

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

12 If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No.

13 Then said Haggai, If *one that is* unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.

14 Then answered Haggai, and said, So *is* this people, and so *is* this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so *is* every work of their hands; and that which they

animal sacrifice that is brought to the Temple, would it make the offering holy? They said, No. But if a person who is unholy and unclean touches any of these offerings, would the offerings be unclean? The answer was, Yes. God said, "So is this people, . . . and so is every work of their hands."

This meant that it is easy to be influenced by being in the company of unsaved people, but no matter how much a person comes to church and associates with the people of God, salvation comes only when that person seeks God himself.

These people had been neglecting the work and service of God and had been serving their own selfish desires so that all they did was unclean and not acceptable to God.

Did you ever think about selfishness being unclean and that it is contagious? Beware of associating with people who are selfish and more interested in doing things for themselves than for God. Paul, the Apostle, wrote to the people of Corinth with these words, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (II Corinthians 6:17).

God showed the people that though they had not been blessed when they were working for themselves, now that they were doing God's will in building the Temple, His blessing on their crops and homes and families would be restored at once.

### **A Challenge**

The prophet's last message is more than an encouragement. It is a challenge to all Christians through all time to keep the temple of their soul well built and in good repair, for Jesus is coming! We know not the day nor the hour of His coming, but we see the signs. We who are ready will be caught up to be with Him while the sinful nations are being shaken by great judgments. Then we will come back with Him riding on white horses (**Revelation 19:14** <sup>14</sup> And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.) when He comes to put down all sin and rebellion and takes His throne in the Temple at Jerusalem.

We love to feel His presence here. But how glorious will be His presence when the people of all nations will go yearly to Jerusalem and see Him and listen to His gracious words!

If we keep the temple of our soul clean by faithful reading of the Bible, praying, and keeping busy in the service of God, it will be worth it all when Jesus comes.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. How do we know that the Jews of Haggai's time did not have enough food and clothing to supply their needs?
2. What reason did God give for the fact that they were not blessed?
3. When we in our nations do not have rain enough for our crops, what is sometimes the reason?
4. Who was talking to the Jews of Jerusalem when Haggai preached?
5. Who talks to us when our minister preaches?
6. What temple are we to build today?
7. To what time was the Lord referring when He said, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former"?
8. What illustration did Haggai give to show that sin is contagious, but righteousness comes only by seeking the Lord?

offer there *is* unclean.

15 And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:

16 Since those *days* were, when *one* came to an heap of twenty *measures*, there were *but* ten: when *one* came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty *vessels* out of the press, there were *but* twenty.

17 I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye *turned* not to me, saith the LORD.

18 Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth *month*, *even* from the day that the foundation of the LORD'S temple was laid, consider *it*.

19 Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless *you*.

20 And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying,

21 Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth;

22 And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

23 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.