

TITLE: BUILDING GOD’S KINGDOM IS THE KEY TO YOUR GLORY

TEXT: Haggai 1:2-8 *“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. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; consider your ways. 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. “Thus saith the Lord of hosts; consider your ways.” 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.”*

INTRODUCTION: The book of Haggai is only two chapters, and for us to understand our text, we have to look at the book from the preceding chapter one. In chapter one we find that the story line actually started from the book of Ezra. The armies of Babylon destroyed God’s temple that was the symbol of His presence with His people. King Cyrus decreed that Jews could return to their beloved city and rebuild the Temple. Ezra tells us of how they travelled back to their home land Jerusalem and began the work.

The work of rebuilding the temple was the reason God divinely intervened and spoke to King Cyrus to allow the Jews to return home. God also gave the Jews, the assignment of finishing the temple in Jerusalem upon their return. However, opposition from hostile neighbours discouraged them and made them to neglect God and the assignments. They became so busy with their own personal interest in rebuilding their own homes rather than building God’s house. They left their God given assignment for their own personal interest.

When we allow ourselves to be distracted, the pressures of life and expectations will push in from all sides and assault our schedules. *Do this! Be there! Finish that! Call them!* It seems as though everyone wants something from us – family, employer, school, and clubs. Soon there is little left in us to give, as we run out of energy and time. If we are not careful, we find ourselves rushing through life, attending to the necessary, the immediate, and the urgent things. And too often, the immediate, is left in the dust and not attended to.

Our problem is not the volume of demand or lack of scheduling skills, but Values – what truly is important to us. We reflect our values and priorities in how we use time, our resources, and strength etc. Often our actions contradict our words! We say we love God and He is number One, but then we relegate Him to a lesser number on our ‘to do’ lists.

Wrong values and apathy brought the work of the Temple to a standstill for 15yrs. Finally, after 15yrs, the Lord sent the prophet Haggai to tell the people to get their priorities right; they forgot their purpose and lost their priorities.

Then Haggai speaks, a voice was heard calling them back to God’s values. ‘Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?’ (1:4).

A voice was heard, calling men and women to the right priorities. God asked the people a question, He said, *'how can you live in luxury when my house lies in ruins?'* The Temple that was the focal point of Judah's relationship with God was still lying in ruins. Rather, the people put their energies into rebuilding and beautifying their own homes. However, the harder they worked for themselves, the less they had, because they ignored their spiritual lives. There is a lesson to be learnt in this account. We must put Jesus and the interest of His kingdom first and when we do, He will provide for us and meet all our needs but if we don't then all our efforts are futile.

Focusing all our energy on our physical needs at the expense of our relationship with God will lead to fruitless efforts. The children of Israel were more concerned with their own needs more than with doing God's will and advancing His kingdom and as a result, they suffered, He withheld His blessings from them. God was no longer their priority and they did not look to Him for blessings and security instead they looked to their farming business for financial security. The people depended on these for security while neglecting the worship of God. As a result, God sent a drought to destroy their livelihood and call them back to Himself.

Moses predicted that this would be the result if the people neglected God in ***Deut 28: 38-45***,

38 *"You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it.*

39 *"You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.*

40 *"You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil; for your olives shall drop off.*

In Conclusion:

Where does God fit in your agenda?

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; consider your ways. 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' (1:7, 8).

The message of God through His servant Haggai became the catalyst for finishing the work. His message turned them around and motivated them to pick up their tools and continue the work they had begun and so carelessly abandoned. Miraculously, they rebuilt the Temple in just 23 days after Haggai's first message. Scarcely has a prophet's message produced such a quick response.

Although Haggai is a small book of only 2 Chapters, yet it is filled with challenges and promises, reminding us of God's claim on our lives and calling us back to the right priorities. As you read these words, I want you to get back to doing the work of God, reorder your priorities in accordance with His will for your life and His will is that you advance His Kingdom and win souls for Him and as you do that, all other things shall be added unto you.

I prophesy that the glory of your today shall be greater than your past and the glory of your future shall be greater than your today in Jesus Mighty Name.

Prayer Points for today

I want you to use today's message to

- Pray against lack of focus and purpose
- Pray against the spirit of busyness that wants to hold you captive from doing God's work
- Pray against the spirit that wants you to put God's Kingdom advancement on hold so that you can be captive to other commitments.
- Ask the Lord for grace
 - To make God and the interest of His kingdom your main priority in life
 - Grace to focus and run tirelessly for Jesus without grumbling
 - Grace to fulfil kingdom assignment

The Holy Communion:

Pray for forgiveness of sins.

I bless the bread and wine and whatever you have. I declare it holy as the symbol of the blood and flesh of Jesus Christ. I pray that as you partake of this communion the life of Christ will be imparted into you.

I pray that God will give you spiritual strength to advance His Kingdom as you ought to do in this Prophetic season of revival in Jesus Mighty Name. Give Jesus thanks!