

They Obeyed the Voice of the Lord: Haggai 1 Explained Scriptures for Today

Haggai 1:12-15

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.

Introduction — The Book of Haggai

The book of Haggai takes place after the people of Judah have returned from captivity in Babylon. The temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed, and now they have come back to rebuild. At first, they started the work, but then they stopped. They became distracted. They focused on their own houses, their own lives, and their own comfort instead of finishing the house of God.

Haggai 1:4

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

God is correcting them. He is showing them that they have put their priorities in the wrong place. Instead of building the house of the LORD, they have been building their own lives first. Earlier in the chapter, God tells them to consider their ways.

Haggai 1:5

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

God is calling them to wake up and see what they are doing. He commands them to build the house of the Lord. And now in verse 12, we see something very important happen. The people respond to the Lord of hosts and to the Lord God Almighty. Let's look at verse 12 closely here.

They Obeyed the Voice of the Lord

Haggai 1:12

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.

This verse shows a turning point. You need one of those same turning points in your life. Get things right. The leaders here are mentioned first in the Scriptures.

Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest are both included. Then it says all the remnant of the people obeyed. That means this was not just a few people. This was the whole group that had returned. They heard the message, and they responded the right way.

The Bible says they obeyed the voice of the LORD and the words of Haggai the prophet. That shows that when God sends a message, obeying that message is obeying God. The Bible is the word of God. Many people out there today don't believe the Bible is the word of God. So-called "Christians" don't believe that either.

Then it says the people feared before the LORD. That means they had respect, reverence, and seriousness about what God said. They did not ignore it. They did not delay. They took it seriously. They believed God and then they did what He said to do. That's fear of the Lord.

Here's an example of no fear of the Lord. When you come to church to get some benefit and not to worship God. You come to church, sleep the entire time, get you some food, and then take off. That's not fear of the Lord. Many people just want to benefit from God and His people, but they will do absolutely nothing in return for God or His people. And I mean nothing.

Take, take, take, take. And do absolutely nothing for God. Take some more, take some more, take some more, and take some more. And do absolutely nothing for God. And I mean NOTHING for God. But these people here in Haggai are different. They hear the word of the Lord, and they DO what He told them to DO.

Luke 11:28

But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

James 1:25

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Hear God's words. To do that, you have to be awake. I am getting tired of people who come into church on Sunday morning and sleep the entire time. I'm going to start getting those people out of here. If it's just us left, it's just us left. Get rid of the accursed thing.

If you want to come and disrespect God's words by sleeping through the entire sermon, then go on home and sleep on your own chair and your own couch. You can stay up all night in the darkness, children of the night, but you can't stay awake in church. HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD AND THEN GO DO WHAT HE SAYS TO DO. Obey the voice of the Lord.

Now, because they heard the word of the Lord and did what the Lord said to do, watch what the Lord says to them next. And remember, he's not saying these things to people who sleep their life away during the most important times of their life. Hearing God's words is the most important time of your life.

God's Response — I Am With You

Haggai 1:13

Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD.

As soon as the people obey, God responds. Haggai is called the LORD'S messenger. That shows he is not speaking his own words. He is delivering God's message exactly as it was given to Him. That's my job here. Deliver God's message in His words. Teach the truth directly from the Bible.

And what is the message? God says, "I am with you." Those 4 words are short and sweet to hear. "I am with you." For example, for those who get to these services week in and week out and work hard for the Lord, I AM WITH YOU. You are at the top of my priority list when it comes to people.

I am with you is simple. It's short, but it's very powerful. God is telling them that now that they have obeyed, His presence is with them. This is not something they earned by being perfect. This is a response to obedience. When they turned and did what God said, God immediately reassured them that He was with them. They weren't doing it, but now they decide to do it. And He says, "I am with you."

Imagine the opposite of that. Imagine the people that come in here with no intentions of worshipping God at all. They are here for many other reasons. They see a church as another benefit to add to their long list of benefits they get while doing absolutely NOTHING to earn anything they get. They see a child as a benefit so they have more children. They get more benefits.

God is not with you in those things. Imagine God saying, "I am AGAINST you." Now that's very serious too. So, you get to make your own choices. If you want to come sleep at church, God isn't with you in those things. The most important time of every week is the times when you should be hearing the word of the Lord.

God Stirs Them Up

Haggai 1:14

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,

That's what we need. We need the Lord to stir up the spirit of the people here and the people out there to do the work of the Lord. That's what happened in the Scriptures right there. Now we see God working in them. "THEY CAME AND DID WORK IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD."

It says the LORD stirred up their spirit. That means God moved them internally. God can do this. He can stir up your spirit. He gave them the desire, the motivation, and the willingness to act.

This starts with the leaders again, Zerubbabel and Joshua, and then it includes all the people. Everyone is involved. And what do they do? They came and did work. They did not just talk about it. They did not just agree with the message. They acted on it. They went to the house of the LORD and started working.

And that's what we should all do. But for most, that's not the priority. The priority is with everything else out there. And people will constantly show that all the time by what they choose to do. So, if God isn't your top priority, don't say that He is. Don't be a liar. And especially don't lie about that. They came and did WORK in the house of the Lord.

Either God is God to you or He isn't. If God isn't your god, who is your god? Is it all the other priorities in your life. All the other things are your god? Everything else is more important than being here to worship God. Okay, then you go with that and see what happens.

Jesus, who died and suffered for you, isn't that important. Everything else is more important. People can be sick, miss church because they are too sick, but they'll go to work because they got to get THAT MONEY! MONEY, MONEY, MONEY. People show who their god happens to be. And until you get God at the top, you'll continue to have all those money problems.

"I'm sick. Can't come to church, but I can go to work and get that money." Not these people in Haggai. They heard the word of the Lord and they obeyed the Lord. Other people hear the words of that money and obey their god who is money. Money doesn't breathe but the people will worship it with everything they've got. NEED THAT MONEY.

They Acted at a Specific Time

Haggai 1:15

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

This is a continuance from the prior verse when the people decided to do the work of the Lord. God's spirit stirred them up. That's what I ask for here in this church and here in this area.

This verse gives us a specific time. Sixth month. 24th day of the month. That shows this is real. God gives exact dates, times, and hours within the Bible. This is not some general idea. This is a real moment when the people changed direction and obeyed God.

It also shows that they did not wait a long time. They responded quickly. When they heard the message, they acted. See, when you hear something here at church that you need to change, and you think "I'll do that later" you won't do it. People love to put things off in this world today. And they never take action.

So, when you hear the word of the Lord, you need to take action. And God notes that exact day and that exact time that you take action. He knows. He's watching. He's waiting for you to make the choice to do the work of the Lord.

You can think about all the time you put into everything else in your life. How much time do you put into the TV? How much time do you put into listening to music of this world? How much time do you put into your job and your career? How much time do you put into your vehicle? How much time do you put into your home, your yard, your plants, your pets, food, drinks?

And then how much time do you put into the Lord? Do the comparison yourself and see what you come up with. As you leave today and start tomorrow. Write down what you do as you do it. And see what you put into the Lord.

What Happened Before All of This in Haggai?

Before this moment, the people were focused on themselves. They were building their own houses while the house of God was left unfinished. They made excuses. They said the time was not right. They delayed what God had told them to do. But when God spoke clearly, everything changed. They listened. They feared the LORD. They obeyed. And they went to work.

Practical Applications

1. **Obedience matters.** The people heard the word of God and acted on it right away.
2. **God responds to obedience.** When they obeyed, God said, "I am with you."
3. **God can stir your spirit.** He can move you to act when you are willing to obey.

It is not enough to hear the word. You must act on it. That's what we learn here in the book of Haggai. We act on God's words by hearing His words, believing what He says, and taking those steps in faith.

Conclusion

This passage shows a complete change. The people were distracted. They were focused on themselves. They were ignoring what God told them to do. But when they heard the message, they obeyed. They feared the LORD. They went to work.

And God responded by saying He was with them and by stirring them up to continue. That is the message. When you hear the word of God, do not delay. Do not make excuses. Obey. And when you do, God will be with you.

Let's pray.