

"Rebuilding God's House Today"

Haggai 1:12-2:5

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Background

This week we'll be looking at a larger chunk of Scripture. What we'll see is the people's response to the Lord's command in 1:8 to "go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored." We'll spend time considering the temple in terms of its significance and importance for God's people and then consider what it might mean for us to be rebuilding God's temple today.

Sermon Text *Haggai 1:12-2:5*

¹² Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the Lord their God had sent him. And the people feared the Lord.

¹³ Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: "I am with you," declares the Lord. ¹⁴ So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They

came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God, ¹⁵ on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.

In the second year of King Darius, ² ¹ on the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: ² "Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people. Ask them, ³ 'Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing?' ⁴ But now be strong, Zerubbabel," declares the Lord. 'Be strong, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,' declares the Lord, 'and work. For I am with you,' declares the Lord Almighty. ⁵ 'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.'

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

2. Sunday Questions:

1. The Reality of the Internal Temple

The sermon emphasizes that under the New Covenant, God no longer dwells in buildings made by human hands but within the bodies of the redeemed. If you truly viewed your body and your life as the literal "holy temple" where God's Spirit lives, how would that shift your perspective on your daily habits, self-talk, or the way you treat others?

2. Redefining "Fear" as Motivation

The first major point of the sermon is that rebuilding requires acknowledging God's sovereignty through "fear" (*Yirah*), defined as profound awe and reverence rather than terror. Can you identify a specific area of your life where God has been "pushed to the sidelines"? How would a sense of "profound awe" for His power move you to action in that area, rather than just causing you to feel guilty?

3. Discerning the "Intersection" of Spirits

The sermon notes that when our spirits and God's Spirit intersect, we are moved to joyfully obey Him. Reflecting on your own service or ministry, how can you tell the difference between working out of your own "human effort" and working because God has "stirred up" your spirit? How does the promise "I am with you" change your level of courage in those moments?

4. Overcoming the "Comparison Trap"

In Haggai's time, people were discouraged because the new temple seemed like "nothing" compared to the glory of the previous one. In your own spiritual "rebuilding" process, do you ever feel like your progress is insignificant or "less than" someone else's? How does God's command to "be strong... and work" help you persevere when the results aren't immediately impressive?

5. Rebuilding Principles

The sermon points out three important principles for us to rebuild:

1. Rebuilding requests our acknowledgement of God's sovereignty and our obedience to his commands.
2. Rebuilding depends on God's on-going presence with us.
3. Rebuilding preserves especially when times get tough.

How do we work these principles into our rebuilding effort?

6. Consistency in the "Long-Haul"

The sermon concludes by stating that temple rebuilding is a "lifetime effort" that requires consistency in disciplines like prayer and Scripture, regardless of whether we are on a spiritual high or in a deep valley. How can we practically support one another to "not become weary" during the "valleys," and what does it look like to have "grace with yourself" while still staying committed to the work?