

Haggai 2:1-9 – Encouragement to Keep Working!

The people listened to God and began rebuilding the temple on the 24th day of the sixth month in 520 B. C. The people had started the rebuilding project once before. The big question now was whether or not they would keep working and complete the rebuilding without any further delays. Zerubbabel and Joshua were the two leaders who led the first rebuilding effort but had let the project fail. What would be different this time? God stirred up their spirits to begin the work and God encouraged them to continue the work. God promised them that their work would be very significant. We like to know that our labors are not in vain.

Read Haggai 2:1-5.

The twenty first day of the seventh month was the seventh day of the Feast of Booths / Tabernacles. This feast was one of the three feasts in which all male adults were required to go up to Jerusalem. The date was October 17, 520 B. C. This was the time of year when Solomon's Temple had been dedicated about 440 years earlier. The rebuilding of the temple had been going on for almost a month. What was the significance of the Feast of Booths / Tabernacles? (2:1)

God spoke to Zerubbabel, Joshua and the remnant through Haggai. God asked three questions? What were the questions? Why did God ask these questions? What happened when the foundation was laid during the first rebuilding attempt? See Ezra 3:10-13. Who was most likely to think that the rebuilding effort was "nothing"? (2:2-3)

What three commands did God give to the people in verses 4 and 5?

In verses 4 and 5, what reasons did God give the people to continue rebuilding the temple?

What covenant (or promise) did God make with the people of Israel after they came out of Egypt? (2:5)

After the people of Israel came out of Egypt, what sign did the people have that God was in their midst? See Exodus 13:21 and Exodus 25:8.

Read Haggai 2:6-9.

What will God shake? When will the shaking occur? What is the result of the shaking? What is this shaking referring to? (2:6-7)

You may be familiar with Handel's Messiah and the song, "Thus saith the Lord" which is based on Haggai 2:6-7 and Malachi 3:1. The song uses a translation which says "the desire of all nations shall come". The ESV and other versions have "the treasures of all nations shall come in." What is the difference in meaning? Which translation do you think is more accurate? How did the author of Hebrews understand this passage? See Hebrews 12:18-29. (2:7)

When the tabernacle was completed what filled the tabernacle? See Exodus 40:34-35. What happened when Solomon's temple was dedicated and the priests placed the ark of the covenant in the holy place? See 1 Kings 8:10-11. In Haggai 2:7, God said that he would fill this second temple with glory. Did a cloud of glory descend on the second temple? How did God fill the second temple with his glory? See John 1:14.

Was the second temple adorned with as much silver and gold as Solomon's temple? Why did God remind the people that the silver and gold is his? (2:8)

How was the later glory of the temple greater than the former glory? (2:9)

How did God give peace "in this place"? Was God referring to peace from wars or was he referring to another peace? (2:9)

What can make us weary in well doing? Is it good to compare current works to God's various works in the past? When can looking at the past inspire and instruct us? When can looking at the past discourage us? How do we keep from being discouraged while building God's kingdom on earth?