



GRACE
SO AMAZING

GRACE SO AMAZING FOR DISTRACTED BELIEVERS

Hag. 1:1-15



UNPRECEDENTED: Iran's crown prince meets Netanyahu, quotes the Bible, extols Cyrus the Great & future 'Cyrus Accords'

"2,500 years ago, Cyrus the Great liberated the Jewish people from captivity and helped them rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem," Pahlavi noted. "It is with profound awe that I visit the Western Wall of that Temple and pray for the day when the good people of Iran and Israel can renew our historic friendship."

Ezra 1:2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and **he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem,** which *is* in Judah.

2 Chron. 36:22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, **the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia,** that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and **he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem,** which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? The LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

When the Jews returned from the captivity to Jerusalem, seventy years of Babylonian and Persian influence went with them. After arriving, they faced other challenges that impeded their purpose.

Since you have been saved, have you ever found yourself distracted from serving God? Why? Our adversary will supply many excuses for distraction, but God, in His grace, will “shake our cage” to move us to repentance and get back to serving Him as we were created to do.

This morning, we will observe an incident in the Old Testament where the Lord stirred up the prophet Haggai to help Israel return to faithfulness in honoring the Lord with their lives.

I. THE CALL TO BUILD, 1:1-15

A. The Background, 1:1-2

1. The Period, 1:1a “In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month...”

❖ Cyrus defeated the Babylonians and decreed that Israel could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple.

❖ Jeremiah prophesied of the return:

Jer. 29:1 Now these *are* the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon; ...
10 For thus saith the LORD, That **after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you**, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

13 And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, **when ye shall search for me with all your heart.**

Dan. 9:2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof **the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

Zech. 7:5 Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *month*, **even those seventy years**, did ye at all fast unto me, *even* to me?

❖ There were some Israelites desiring to return to Jerusalem, and some did not.

Ezra 2:64 The whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred *and* threescore,
65 Beside their servants and their maids, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and *there were* among them two hundred singing men and singing women.

- ❖ Cyrus decreed the opportunity for the Jews to return in 538 B.C.
- ❖ By 536 B.C. the returning Jews had laid the foundation of the Temple.
- ❖ The date listed in Hag. 1:1a “In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month...” is August 29, 520 B.C.

2. The Prophet, 1:1b “...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,”

- ❖ From the time of Cyrus’ decree until the calling of Haggai was 16 years.
- ❖ The Jews had challenges that stopped their progress in building the Temple.
- ❖ The mixed-breed Samaritans were a hindrance from “without,” and were a discouragement to the returning Jews.

- ❖ The Jews stopped the work on the Temple and focused upon their personal goals.
- ❖ The Lord is concerned with what we do, why we do it, and how it pertains to His glory.
- ❖ To help the Jews refocus, God called Haggai and Zechariah to Jerusalem.
- ❖ Haggai was to stir the hearts of the Jews to rebuild the Temple while Zechariah had a broader vision, one that took in the world, especially the world at the end of time.

3. The Problem, 1:2

Hag. 1:2 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.**

- ❖ The Lord revealed His concern about His people and His plan – the House of God.
- ❖ The people had replaced God's priority with their own.
- ❖ The issue was stewardship of time – usage of it was God's concern.

B. The Burden, 1:3-11

1. The Context, 1:3-4

Hag. 1:3 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?

- ❖ Haggai's sarcastic message was the Lord's demand for accountability in comparing time-usage. What we do is a reflection of our beliefs and priorities.

2. The Content, 1:5-11

a. The Jews' Condition Exposed, 1:5-6

Hag. 1:5 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.

❖ The Lord's command was "...Consider your ways."

Original Word: דִּישׁ **Part of Speech:** Verb
(Imperative) **Transliteration:** sum or sim
Definition: to put, place, set (consider)

<https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7760.htm>

CONSIDER – to *consider* to view attentively, to sit by; to sit. The literal sense is, to sit by or close, or to set the mind or the eye to; hence, **to view or examine with attention.**

1. To fix the mind on, with a view to a careful examination; to think on with care; to ponder; to study; to meditate on.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/consider>

- ❖ The Jews were commanded to refocus their priorities by an honest examination of their actions and circumstances.

b. The Jews' Condition Explained, 1:7-11

(1) The Cause, 1:7-9

Hag. 1:7 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.**

❖ The Lord gave four commands:

- “...Consider your ways.” = evaluate your life’s activities.
- “Go up to the mountain...” = explore for materials.
- “...bring wood...” = extract the resources.
- “...build the house...” = erect the House of God.

- ❖ He informed them what their actions should be, and what the purpose would accomplish –
“...and **I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified**, saith the LORD.”
- ❖ The Jews’ expectations were disappointed by God.

Hag. 1:9a “Ye looked for much, and, lo, *it came* to little; and when ye brought *it* home, I did blow upon it...”

Deut. 28:38 and Lev. 26:18 contain warnings to Israel regarding God’s dealings.

❖ The explanation indicated skewed priorities:

Hag. 1:9b "...Why? saith the LORD of hosts. **Because of mine house that *is* waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.**"

❖ When a believer gets out of the will of God, the consequences are calamitous.

(2) The Consequences, 1:10-11

Hag. 1:10 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth 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.

❖ Misplaced priorities have consequences that bring misfortune and misery.

Prov. 13:15 Good understanding giveth favour: but **the way of transgressors is hard.**

C. The Blessing, 1:12-15

1. The Response, 1:12

Hag. 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.

- ❖ The political and spiritual leaders responded with obedience to the preaching.

2. The Reassurance, 1:13

Hag. 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.*

❖ Repentance brings reconciliation to God and a return to fellowship with Him.

3. The Revival, 1:14-15

a. The Truth, 1:14

Hag. 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,**

- ❖ Repentance, reconciliation, and a renewal of focus leads to submission to God's priorities and doing His work, His way.

REVIVAL PRODUCED GOD'S DESIRE!

b. The Time, 1:15

Hag. 1:15 In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

- ❖ In 23 days, the working of the Holy Spirit stirred the hearts of the Jews to move from lethargy to laboring in God's work.

Summary

- ❖ After 70 years of captivity, the Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple as decreed by Cyrus, king of Persia.
- ❖ After laying the foundation of the Temple, the Jews were hindered by the Samaritans from rebuilding, and the Jews quit the construction of God's house and focused upon building their own houses.
- ❖ After 16 years of neglecting their priorities, the Jews saw God raise up Haggai and Zechariah to challenge the focus of priorities of His people.
- ❖ The Lord is concerned with what we do, why we do it, and how it pertains to His glory.

- ❖ In a little over three weeks, the Holy Spirit moved the Jews to repentance and rebuilding the House of God.
- ❖ The primary focus for the Jews was to “consider your ways.” Are your ways pleasing the Lord?

Conclusion

Col. 3:1 **If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above**, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 **Set your affection on things above**, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When **Christ, who is our life**, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Zech. 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, **Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.**