

**I WILL FILL THIS HOUSE WITH GLORY***Haggai 2:1-19 (Key verse 7)**I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty.*

From last week's passage we have learnt how the Lord through the prophet Haggai turned the hearts of the people of Israel who were living in paneled houses while the house of the Lord remained in ruins. The Lord encouraged the people of Israel to build the house of the Lord by going up to the mountain and bring timber and build the house so that he may take pleasure in it and be honored. Filled with the desire to bring pleasure and honor to the Lord, the people of Israel obeyed. However, through today's passage we will see the people of Israel filled with fear, hesitation and discouragement to build the house of the Lord. They felt this way because they thought they do not have the capacity to build the house to anything closer to its former. They were worried that they will not be able to bring pleasure and honor to the Lord. They were worried that the house will not be filled with glory like the former. However, through the key verse the Lord responded that He Himself will fill this house with glory. We are therefore going to learn what it means that the Lord will fill this house with glory and how. We are also going to learn what attitude we should have in response to this promise of God that he will fill this house with glory and how we can experience it. May God be with each one of us to receive one word today.

**Part 1: Be strong, for I am with you (1-5).**

The passage today begins with the word of the Lord that came to prophet Haggai on the second year, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month of King Darius in **verse 2-3** saying: *"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, / '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?'"* The Lord gave prophet Haggai this word about a month after Zerubabel, Joshua, the high priest and the remnant of the people had accepted the command of God to go up the mountain and build the house of the Lord. The Lord gave this word, for as they began to do the work, the older generation began to think about the former house of the Lord, the temple that King Solomon built and possibly shared with the younger its details. They began to think about how great and magnificent it was, they began to think about how the building of the former temple was well resourced. They compared the conditions of the former temple with that of the current temple. Thinking about the former house left them with doubt, they thought the current seemed like nothing. They wondered whether there will be any glory in the current temple. They looked at themselves and resources at hand, and they thought they will not be able to match up with the former.

In the previous passage the Lord commanded that they should *build the house that he may take pleasure in it*, however when they considered the possible output in comparison with the former, they thought there is no way the Lord will be pleased. Although they Lord's command was very clear that they should go up the mountain and take timber and build the house, they were left afraid, and pessimistic and this paralyzed them to continue with the work. What happened here is not foreign to us as well, in the same way we might worry if we would be able to serve in the UBF ministry like the Korean missionaries, like Sh. Christian and Sarah did? We might worry if we would be able to raise faithful disciples of Jesus like the them? We might worry if we are doing enough? And the danger is that these fear and worries end up paralyzing us, filling us with discouragement and hindering us from doing the work.

But Glory to God, for when he saw this fear and discouragement in the people of Israel, he sent his word to them through the prophet Haggai. Let us look at **verse 4-5**: *"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. / 'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.'"* The Lord sent his word to encourage the people of Israel, the Lord understood them and wanted to help them so that they can be motivated to do the work and be blessed through honoring God by doing the work. The Lord encouraged them to be strong? God encouraged them in this way because when we do the work of God there are always forces working against us. The enemy always wants to hinder us from doing the work of God. For example has any of you noticed how something just comes up when you are supposed to do Bible study or write testimony? To beat this temptation and opposing forces, we need to be strong. How can we be strong? We can be strong because through His word, the Lord promises his presence. Yes, on our own perhaps we can do nothing, but because the Lord is with us, we can be strong and overcome. When the people of Israel where in slavery in Egypt, escaping was a far thought, but when the Lord was with them they could exit Egypt on Eagles wings into the promised land. Regardless how much Pharaoh hardened his heart, the

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Lord could rescue them because he was with them. Even though the situation was impossible, the glory of the Lord could be revealed. So, in the same way, we too can do the work of God regardless of the opposing forces. Just as God could enable the missionaries to do the work and raise disciples, we too can do the work for the Lord.

### Part 2: I will fill this house with glory (6-9).

When the passage began the Lord revealed to us the hearts of the Israelites who were filled with fear, discouraged and paralyzed because they thought they will not be able to bring pleasure to the Lord. They thought the glory of the current house is insignificant. But here the Lord declared through his word spoken by the prophet Haggai that the glory of this present house will be much greater than the glory of the former house. How can we understand this? What is the glory referring to? Let us look at **verse 9**: *“The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,” says the Lord Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”* The glory of the Lord is the presence of the Lord. King Solomon built the temple that the Lord may dwell in it. Now previously the people of Israel associated the glory of God with the physical features of the temple, how magnificent it looked and the likes. Though the physical structure of the temple is important. The glory of the house does not depend on the physical structure of the temple, but solely depends on God according to his wisdom and mercy. Furthermore, through the words of the Lord saying: *“And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the Lord Almighty”* we can see that the glory of the Lord means peace to the people.

Now in what sense will the glory of the present house be greater than that of the former house? Let us look at the key **verse 7**: *“I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,” says the Lord Almighty.”*

The glory will be much greater because the desired of all nations will come. Here the desired of all nations refers to what all people desire. Though people might follow different paths, what we all search for and desire is one and that is true peace. And that true peace can only be found in Jesus Christ, in this world many things can offer peace, getting a good job, holiday, passing at school etc, however all these things can offer us only temporary peace. But through Jesus we can have true and everlasting peace because Jesus is the prince of peace. And so, through this word, Haggai prophesied concerning the Messiah who will establish this new house. The former house was just a mirror image of the house that is established through Jesus. Through Jesus the complete and true house is established.

Furthermore, the glory of the present house will be much greater because the Lord himself will fill the house with glory. Sending Jesus in this world to fill the house with glory was not men’s decision, it did not depend on men’s effort or capability. But it was all God’s decision according to his wisdom and mercy. The prophet Haggai said: *“and I will fill this house with glory,” says the Lord Almighty.”* God sent Jesus Christ his one and only son into this world, to live among us sinners, to bear with us and finally to die a shameful and painful death in our place. Because of Jesus, we are no longer subjected to the consequence of our sins, but we are saved. This is the great glory of God, the great blessing and peace, no other glory, blessing, or peace in this world can surpass these. Indeed, the glory of the current house is much greater, the glory of Jesus Christ is much greater.

### Part 3: Give careful thought to this from this day on (10-19).

After encouraging the people of Israel to be strong and taught them about the true glory of the Lord, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai again on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month on the second year of King Darius. This was 2 months after the Lord had spoken to them and encouraged them. What was the word of the Lord this time around? Let us look at **verse 11 – 14**:

*“This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Ask the priests what the law says: 12 If someone carries consecrated meat in the fold of their garment, and that fold touches some bread or stew, some wine, olive oil or other food, does it become consecrated?’” The priests answered, “No.” 13 Then Haggai said, “If a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches one of these things, does it become defiled?” “Yes,” the priests replied, “it becomes defiled.” 14 Then Haggai said, “So it is with this people and this nation in my sight,” declares the Lord. ‘Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled.*

Here the Lord addressed the people of Israel concerning the attitude they have as believers, the Lord’s command to them was very clear and that is to do the work that he may take pleasure in it and be honored. However, as the people of Israel

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did the work, they only focused on the outward self and did not focus on their hearts, they did the physical work, but yet they did not repent from their sins. What they did was more like doing the work habitually, without a heart. And so the Lord asked their priests about being holy and being defiled. The priests were very spot on in their answer that anything holy, if it touches something defiled, the defiled remains defiled and not holy. But if a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches the consecrated things, then the consecrated things become defiled. The people of Israel were defiled, they did not repent and come before God to purify them, and they did not carefully consider their impurity. And today, the Lord says: *“Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled.”* And so the Lord said to them to give careful thought to this from this day, doing the works in the church, and coming to church without a heart, without repentance does not bring pleasure to God, it does not honor God.

God desires our heart when we do his work, yes it is absolutely good and desired to give ourselves fully to the Lord, live sacrificially, but this must not be habitually. In **verse 17** it says: *“I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew and hail, yet you did not return to me,” declares the Lord.* In all that we do, let us return to the Lord, let us depend on Jesus Christ our Lord as we build the house of the Lord, let us not do it habitually, but daily surrender to Jesus and allow his word to change us so that our work may bring pleasure and honor to the Lord. So that we can experience the glory of the Lord, instead of burdens as we give ourselves to the service of the Lord. In **verse 18-19** the Lord said to the people of Israel: *“From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the Lord’s temple was laid. Give careful thought: / Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. “From this day on I will bless you.”* If we carefully consider our service to the Lord, and do the work with repentant hearts, the Lord promises to bless us, to grant us his peace which transcends all understanding. The Lord will find pleasure and be honored in our work.

### Conclusion:

Since having a baby, things have been busy in my home especially for my wife. I watched her struggle with joining Bible studies, for during the Bible study time is when Ona is grumpier that even I am not able to keep her quiet, all she wants is to be in her mother's arms. Also, for some reason, I found myself not having time at all. And this brought me worries that my family might be putting some burdens on other leaders and sheep in our ministry. I also worried that my service to the Lord was slacking compared to how the Korean missionaries, Sh. Christian and Sarah served, and perhaps how they taught us to serve in God’s ministry. However instead of helping me to change perhaps, these thoughts paralyzed me and left me feeling some form of unworthiness to a degree, and these affected my co-working with other leaders and how I serve sheep, it also affected my prayer life.

But glory to God, for through today’s passage I have learnt that these fear and worries are the work of the devil, I have learnt that this way of thinking and comparison is not Godly, but the work of the enemy who is trying to hinder progress in the rebuilding of the house. To overcome this, the Lord is encouraging to be strong for he is with me. Furthermore, I have learnt that filling the house of the Lord with glory in our ministry, in my home is the work of the Lord himself. God in his great wisdom sent his one and only son Jesus into this world, to bring glory to the whole world, bringing peace and great blessing to many souls through having compassion on all people, and loving every sinner all the way to the cross. I pray that I may focus on Jesus the desire of the world who has filled the world with his glory. Lastly, I have learnt that what is more important as I do the work of God is the heart, the heart of repentance, a heart that fully depends of Jesus and doing his will and purpose, and also a heart for God’s sheep. I pray that I may not do things habitually but do it with heart so that I too can experience the blessing of God which he promised through this passage saying: *“From this day on I will bless you.”*