Message Two

The Prophecy of Haggai concerning the Recovery of the Building of God's House

Scripture Reading: Ezra 5:1; Hag. 1:1-14; 2:7a

I. We need to be enlightened by and fully saturated with the thought that in this universe God is doing only one thing—building His eternal habitation—Gen. 28:16-19; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; Rev. 21:2-3:

A. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of life and building; life is God Himself, and building is the expression of God as life in a corporate Body—Eph. 4:18, 16.

B. God's building is the desire of God's heart and the goal of God's salvation—Exo. 25:8:

1. God desires a dwelling place on earth for His expression—a dwelling place constituted with Christ and according to Christ—1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 1:5, 9; 2:20-22.
2. God's building is the mingling of God with man, the corporate expression of God, and the enlargement of God—the Triune God as life being wrought into us so that we may become His corporate expression—John 14:20; 15:4a; 17:22; Eph. 3:17a, 19b, 21; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.
3. Whatever God is doing today—in preaching the gospel, in edifying the saints, and in establishing churches—is part of His building work; these activities are part of God's main work, the work of building—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Pet. 2:5.

C. God's desire that we build a dwelling place for Him on earth can be fulfilled only if we have been delivered from the world and have nothing besides God Himself—Exo. 25:8; Psa. 73:25-26; Eph. 2:1-12:

1. The world is against God's building, and God's building is opposed to the world—John 15:18; 1 John 2:17.
2. In order to be God's dwelling place, we must know the world in a thorough way, and the element of the world must be purged out of our being—Rom. 12:2.

D. Regarding the building up of God's dwelling place, there is a conflict, a severe fighting, between God and His enemy—Ezra 4:1-4, 24; Matt. 16:18:

1. The enemy does not like to see the building of God's dwelling place going on in a good way; therefore, he will do everything he can to interrupt, interfere, frustrate, attack, and destroy.
2. The aim of all attack, opposition, and evil speaking is to hinder the building of God's dwelling place for the fulfillment of His purpose.

E. To be built up with fellow believers is the Lord's supreme and highest requirement of His faithful seekers according to the divine oneness of the Divine Trinity—John 17.

F. Being built up with fellow partakers of the divine life is the highest virtue of one who pursues Christ according to God's eternal economy—Phil. 3:12; Eph. 3:9.

G. Only the church built up according to the Lord's desire can be the stepping stone into the age of the kingdom; thus, for the sake of His coming back, the Lord needs the church to be built up—Matt. 16:18-19, 27-28.

II. The prophecy of Haggai concerns Jehovah's dealing with the returned captives for the building of His house—Hag. 1:1-14; 2:7a:

A. The central thought of Haggai's prophecy is that the building of the house of Jehovah is related to the welfare of God's people today and to the coming of the millennial kingdom with its Messiah in the age of restoration—1:2, 8; 2:6-9, 20-23; Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:20-21.

B. In the Old Testament the house of God, or the temple, was first a type of Christ as the house of God individually and then a type of the church, the Body, the enlarged Christ, as God's house corporately; thus, Haggai's prophecy refers to us, the New Testament believers, since we are the reality of the type—John 2:19-21; 1 Tim. 3:15.

C. Haggai's speaking to Zerubbabel the governor, representing the kingship, and Joshua the high priest, representing the priesthood, was to strengthen and encourage them and the people for the rebuilding of the temple as God's house—Ezra 5:1; Hag. 1:1.

D. The self-serving and God-neglecting returned captives were taking care of their houses but not Jehovah's house (v. 4); the word *run* in verse 9 indicates that the people were busy caring for their own houses:

1. Haggai 1:6 indicates that if we neglect the church, we will have no real enjoyment or satisfaction.
2. Regarding the recovery of the building of God's house, we cannot be neutral; we must be absolute, either taking care of our houses first or taking care of the Lord's house first—Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:57-62; Phil. 2:20-21.

E. For the recovery of the building of God's house, God's elect were stirred up in their spirit and came and did work in the house of Jehovah—Hag. 1:14.

F. In our response to the Lord's charge, we all should be occupied by the Lord Jesus in the work of preaching the gospel, feeding the new believers, and taking care of others for the building up of the Lord's house, the church as the Body of Christ—John 21:15-17.

G. "I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come"—Hag. 2:7a:

1. This refers to Christ, who is the Desire of all the nations—Mal. 3:1b:
   a. Even though the nations do not know Christ, they still desire Christ.
   b. For the nations to desire such things as light, love, joy, and righteousness, the reality of which is Christ, means that, unconsciously, they desire Christ.
2. The coming of Christ as the Desire of all the nations depends on the return of God's people from their captivity in Babylon and the recovery of the building of God's house—1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5.

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