

## Message Four

### **The Recovery of the Building of the House of God through the Divine Encouragement of the Prophets of God**

Scripture Reading: Ezra 5:1-2; Hag. 1:2-5, 7-8, 9b, 14; 2:6-7, 9a, 23; Zech. 3:9; 4:2-7, 11-14

**I. In the rebuilding of the recovered temple as the house of God, both Joshua (representing the priesthood) and Zerubbabel (representing the kingship) became somewhat weak and discouraged; therefore, God used the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to speak for Him in order to strengthen, assist, and encourage Joshua and Zerubbabel—Ezra 5:1-2; cf. 1 Cor. 14:3.**

**II. The central thought of Haggai's prophecy is that the building of the house of God, the temple of God, 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—Hag. 1:2-5, 7-8, 9b, 14; 2:6-9, 20-23; Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:20-21:**

- A. In the Old Testament the house of Jehovah, 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—John 2:19-21; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- B. Because the house of Jehovah is a type of the church, Haggai's prophecy refers to us, the New Testament believers, since we are the reality of the type.
- C. Haggai's speaking to Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest 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.
- E. Haggai 1:6 indicates that if we neglect the church, we will have no real enjoyment or satisfaction; 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.
- F. 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; 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—Hag. 1:14; 2:7a; 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; even though the nations do not know Christ, they still desire Christ; 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—Mal. 3:1b.
  - 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.
- H. "I will fill this house with glory...The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former"—Hag. 2:7b, 9a:
  - 1. The glory of God, the expression of God, is in the building of God, the house of Jehovah—Exo. 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chron. 3:1; 5:1-2, 13-14; Eph. 3:21; Rev. 21:10-11.

2. In a vision of God, Ezekiel saw the glory of Jehovah return to the house of Jehovah and fill the house (Ezek. 43:1-5); the glory of Jehovah returned to the house because the building of the house was completed (vv. 2, 5); this indicates that in order for the God of glory to dwell in the church, the church must be built up to become the dwelling place of God (Eph. 2:21-22; 3:14-21).
  3. Ezekiel saw that the river of water of life flowing forth out of the house of God was toward the east, the direction of God's glory (Ezek. 47:1; 43:2); if we do not care for the glory of God, the flow in us will be limited.
  4. In the church life the first consideration we should have is the Lord's glory; the decisions in the church life must be made primarily according to the Lord's glory—Eph. 3:21; 4:20; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Jude 24-25.
  5. The glorification of God is the purpose of our service; the highest service that we can render to God is for us to glorify God by living the life of a God-man (Isa. 43:7; John 7:16-18; 17:1-4; Rom. 9:21, 23; Phil. 1:19-21a; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 10:31); this is so that we may express God in a corporate, built-up way and enter into the oneness in the divine glory (John 17:22-24).
- I. Jehovah's making Zerubbabel as a signet ring (Hag. 2:23) indicates that Jehovah regarded him as His representative and that He loved him and trusted him; in this matter Zerubbabel is a type of Christ, and He is the One whom God loves and trusts (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 3:35; 17:2); as such a person, Christ is qualified to take care of the building of God's house, the church (Matt. 16:18).

**III. The book of Zechariah reveals that the seven lamps of the lampstand (4:2; Rev. 4:5) are the seven Spirits of God, the sevenfold intensified Spirit (1:4), as the seven eyes of Jehovah (Zech. 4:10), the seven eyes of the redeeming Lamb (Rev. 5:6), and the seven eyes of the building stone (Zech. 3:9) for the full expression of the Triune God and the rebuilding of the house of God:**

- A. The stone set before Joshua in Zechariah 3:9 typifies Christ as the stone for God's building (Psa. 118:22; Matt. 21:42); Jehovah's engraving of the stone indicates that when Christ was dying on the cross, He was engraved, cut, by God; Jehovah's removing the iniquity of the land in one day indicates that the Christ on whom God has worked will remove the sin of the land of Israel in one day, the day of His crucifixion; through His death on the cross, Christ, the Lamb of God, took away the sin of the world (1 Pet. 2:24; John 1:29):
1. The stone, Jehovah, and the Lamb are one; Christ is the redeeming Lamb and the building stone, and He is also Jehovah; Christ is the Lamb-stone—the Lamb for redemption and the stone for building—Rev. 5:6; Zech. 3:9.
  2. In God's building Christ is the foundation stone to uphold the building, the cornerstone to join together the Gentile and Jewish members of His Body, and the topstone of grace to consummate everything in God's building—Isa. 28:16; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6; Zech. 4:7.
  3. The fact that Christ, the Lamb of God, is the building stone with seven eyes reveals that the seven eyes of Christ are for God's building—John 1:29; Zech. 3:9; Rev. 5:6.
  4. Christ is the building stone with seven eyes, the seven Spirits, to transfuse Himself into us in order to transform us into precious materials for God's building; as the Lord looks at us, His seven eyes transfuse Himself into us—Zech. 3:9; 1 Cor. 3:12a; Rev. 3:1; 5:6.
- B. For the completion of God's building, the sevenfold intensified Spirit is the eyes of Christ as the redeeming Lamb and the building stone to observe and search us and to

infuse and transfuse us with Christ's essence, riches, and burden for God's building—Zech. 3:9; 4:7; Rev. 1:14; 5:6:

1. The seven eyes of the Lamb infuse us with Christ as the judicial Redeemer, and the seven eyes of the stone infuse us with Christ as the organic Savior for God's economical move on earth through His judicial redemption and by His organic salvation for the goal of His building—John 1:29; Acts 4:11-12; Rom. 5:10.
  2. Within us we have two lamps—the sevenfold intensified Spirit of God within our spirit (Prov. 20:27; Rev. 4:5; 1 Cor. 6:17); in order to be transformed, we must fully open to the Lord in prayer to allow the lamp of the Lord with the seven lamps of fire to search all the chambers of our soul, shining on and enlightening our inward parts to supply them with life.
  3. The one who experiences the greatest amount of transformation is the one who is fully open to the Lord; by the operation of the sevenfold intensified Spirit within Christ's seeking believers, they are intensified to become the overcomers to build up the Body of Christ, which consummates the New Jerusalem.
- C. In His resurrection Christ, as the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit (15:45b; John 6:63a; 2 Cor. 3:6b), who is also the sevenfold intensified Spirit; this Spirit is the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2); hence, the function of the seven Spirits is to impart the divine life into God's people for the building up of God's eternal habitation, the New Jerusalem.
- D. The sevenfold intensified Spirit is the seven lamps of fire to burn, enlighten, expose, search, judge, purify, and refine us to produce the golden lampstands for the fulfillment of God's New Testament economy—Rev. 4:5; 1:2, 4, 9-12, 20.
- E. The two olive trees on the two sides of the lampstand signify Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor at the time, who were the two sons of oil, filled with the Spirit of Jehovah for the rebuilding of God's temple—Zech. 4:1-6, 11-14:
1. The two sons of oil also typify the two witnesses, Moses and Elijah, in the last three and a half years of the present age, who will be witnesses of God in the great tribulation for the strengthening of God's peoples—the Israelites and the believers in Christ—Rev. 11:3-12; 12:17.
  2. In principle, all the believers in Christ should be sons of fresh oil, those who are filled with the fresh, present, and consummated Spirit as the oil of gladness, to flow out the Spirit into the lampstand for its shining testimony, the testimony of Jesus—1:12, 20; Psa. 45:7; 46:4; 92:10; John 7:38:
    - a. The church as the lampstand is the solid embodiment of the Triune God with the sevenfold intensified Spirit as the oil of God in His divine nature.
    - b. The oil itself is gold (Zech. 4:12), which means that the gold flows as oil; when more oil is added into the lampstand, that means more gold is added.
    - c. Day by day we need to pay the price to gain more gold, more of God in His divine nature, so that we can become a pure golden lampstand for the building of the golden New Jerusalem—2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:18; 1:20; 21:18; Matt. 25:8-9.
    - d. As we apply this matter to our experience today, we see that the Spirit who flows out of us is God, and God is gold; thus, when we minister Christ to others, supplying them with oil, we are actually supplying them with God; God is flowing out from us into them—Zech. 4:12-14; John 7:37-39; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8.
    - e. We all should be olive trees, emptying God from ourselves into others; in this way oil will be provided to the needy by those who are olive trees out of which God is flowing—Rom. 11:17; Luke 10:34; cf. John 7:37-39.