

Give Careful Thoughts to Your Ways

Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai, “Is it a time for you to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?” Now, this is what the Lord Almighty says, “Give careful thoughts to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but you are not warm. You earn wages; only to put them in a purse with hole in it.” (Haggai 1:3-6)

It is written in the word of God, “Open rebuke is better than hidden love.” Sometimes the truth is painful but it is the best. In some occasions God’s word is heavy but we have to know that God loves us and He cares for us. His word is necessary for us to live a life to the full, in a perfect way pleasing to God and according to His will.

The word of God that we will be going to meditate upon is from the book of Haggai, and it describes the behavior and the life of the people of God where God was not pleased with their ways of living. At the moment of history God’s people were coming back from a country where they were in exile and under slavery for many years. They came back to their own country but they found their houses and their properties all in ruin. So each one of them started to build their own house perfectly, but they forgot the house of God. They were busy with their own personal belongings, but they forgot to care for the things that belong to God.

Likewise, in this life if we observe carefully we find the people doing the same. We observe the student how is studying daily his lessons, going everyday to the college, diligently preparing for his exams, arranging his schedules, doing research and whatever project he is asked for in order to be perfect. Every time when we ask about him he is involved in his studies. But what about God? Is he reading his Bible? Does he also study the word of God? Does he give time to worship God? He is giving much attention to his studies, but he has no time to give to God. It will be better for him if he spends a time to read the Bible and pray to God and ask wisdom and direction from God on how to plan properly for his career.

Let us go to those who have business: We find them working the whole day. From morning till night, seven days a week, they are fully occupied with their business. They plan to get more increase and add more to their capital. They try to increase their influence to people and win ore relationships and friends. But, we find them unaware about God. They many no even show concern about God’s business or about what God wants them to do. They are negligent to follow God’s way, or to be thankful and faithful to what He has given them.

How about you? Are you busy all the time with your work? Are you so ambitious to succeed and progress in your work? How do you spend your time? Do bad habits or vices snatch you away from God? Is your sleep hindering you from going to worship with other believers in Jesus? Do you love watching movie films, drinking beers, playing cards, gambling, going to night clubs and parties? All these

things will break your relationship with God and will keep you away from Him, you may think to do all these things to become happy, but the truth is this, “*Being away from God is sorrow and grief.*”

Let us ponder the words of God through Prophet Haggai:

1. *Is it time for you, yourselves to be living in you paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?” (Haggai 1:4)* This is the time that you should consider your priorities. Your first priority is not your family, not your profession, not your career or you business. Your first priority is God. God created all things and all things are under His hand. God must be your first priority because everything that you have comes from God. You must give your time and your concern to God because all what you have had come from HIM. God is the provider and the rewarder of all who trust Him. God has given His Only and One Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for your sins and He was buried and raised from the dead on the third day to give you eternal life. If God did not spare His Son for your sake, will He not be able to build your house and your family?
2. *“You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but you are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.” (Haggai 1:6)* The Bible describes the condition of a man who works much but gains less. Someone who works hard but he receives less. And someone who receives much but he enjoys less. He who is away from God neglects God’s work and God’s blessing. People think that having more overtime means getting more money. Yet it does not become a blessing because God is not the priority but the money from the overtime. For someone to break such vicious cycle of life, he must cancel his appointments that hinder him from coming back to God and to worship God. The reason that many are hungry, thirsty, feeling cold and sick, sad and sorrowful is because they are busy concentrating on themselves and not on God. They are poor because they are far away from God. Their greater labor and business contributes more into their lack. “*You expected much but see, it turned out to be little.*” The reason they are in trouble is because they are careless to follow God’s way and serve Him.

My dear and beloved: The message of God that is gives to you is not to hinder you from working hard to build your own family, your own work, your own house, profession and career but to consider God first and to take decision to follow God and give Him the first priority in your life and to serve Him.

“Heavenly Father, I come before You in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for me to give me eternal life. O Lord renews my mind and helps me to correct my ways and to consider you first in my life. Free me, Lord, from doing things that is not according to your will. Thank You, Lord. This is my prayer in Jesus’ name, Amen.”