

**Put God First**  
**(The Book of Haggai)**  
Part 11

<sup>d</sup> *On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: <sup>2</sup> "Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people. Ask them, <sup>3</sup> '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? <sup>4</sup> But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD. 'Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, 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. <sup>5</sup> 'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.' <sup>6</sup> "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty. <sup>9</sup> '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." (Haggai 2:1-9)*

After the people responded to the call of God through His prophet Haggai to rebuild the temple of God they were still having some sort of discouragement that occupied their minds and that worked to hinder them to proceed and do the work of God. Their discouragement came from two main reasons:

**1- Opposition for the rebuilding:** *<sup>d</sup> Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. <sup>2</sup> Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jozadak set to work to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them, helping them. <sup>3</sup> At that time Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates went to them and asked, "Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and restore this structure?" <sup>4</sup> They also asked, "What are the names of the men constructing this building?" <sup>5</sup> But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until a report could go to Darius and his written reply be received." (Ezra 5:1-5)* When you decide to follow God and obey Him, devil will not be happy with such decision. And he will work it out and will use people to discourage you. That what happened with the people when they decided to obey God and it might happen with you. Even devil may cause you

other problems in your work, finances, or in your family life in order to hinder you. Therefore <sup>8</sup> *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." (1Peter 5:8-9)* When you face opposition then ask God to help you and to give you wisdom how to face the situation.

**2- Underestimation of your capabilities and what God can do through you:** Some of those who were involved in the rebuilding they had witnessed with their eyes the previous temple that was built by Solomon before its destruction, <sup>d2</sup> *But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy." (Ezra 3:12)* They were discouraged because they needed to start from the ground laying the foundation, and with their minds the previous temple and they doubted that they can do what Solomon were able to build. When you respond to God's call never put in your mind thoughts that discourage you. Never put in your mind that it is impossible to restore back what you had lost in the past. Never put in your mind thoughts that compare what you are doing and your ministry with someone else work and ministry. As God called you to rebuild your life, God is able to help you and restore you to the image and the plan that He created for. God can and will do exceedingly more than what you think or imagine. The Lord encouraged His people with the following message, *"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house." (Haggai 2:9a)* What you are going to work with God to restore will be greater than what you lost. Your later life will be more glorious than the previous part.

God encouraged His people with the following message: *"But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD. 'Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, 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." (Haggai 2:4)* Be encouraged and mobilized with these words of God:

**A- "Be strong":** repeated three times to urge you to come out from your fear, despondency and discouragement. God wants you to fully trust Him that He will help you and aid you.

**B- "and Work":** God gave you hands and feet and that is the time for you to put your faith in action and start to work hard. *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)*

C- ***“For I am with you,” declares the LORD Almighty.***: This is God’s promise that He will neither leave you nor forsake you till He will accomplish what He had promised you. When the Lord said ***“For I am with you,”*** He is confirming that to you further with the following promises:

***1- The Holy Spirit with you, “my Spirit remains among you”:*** *the twenty-first day of the seventh month* the time that God sent His word of encouragement was the last date of the feast of the Tabernacles celebration. And we know that Jesus attended the feast of the Tabernacles and, ***“<sup>37</sup> On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ <sup>39</sup> By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.” (John 7:37-39)*** When you respond to God’s call and be willing to rebuild your life and future according to God’s word and will The Holy Spirit will fill you and overflow through you to achieve and accomplish what God had promised you.

***2- No fear, “Do not fear”:*** As you decided to love God and obey Him fear will go away and you will find yourself doing the work of God and living your life away from fear, ***“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.” (1John 4:18)***

***3- God’s wonderful acts and miracles, “In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land”:*** The Lord will do extraordinary miraculous acts so that things will work out for your good and benefit to let you pursue what God had called you to do in order to build your life and ministry in accordance to God’s will and plan.

***4- God’s favour for you in the hearts of the people around you, “I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come.”*** God’s favour in your life will touch many people around you to rise and support you and the vision that God had entrusted to you to build your life and ministry according to His will. As well as God will enable you to reach the nations with the Gospel of Jesus and the Church will include further languages and nationalities. ***“Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.” (Psalm 2:8)*** And indeed God will enable you to be part and fulfilled with the Lord and His Church the great commission, ***“<sup>d8</sup> Then Jesus***

***came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’ (Matthew 28:18-20)***

***5- Your life will be God’s glory, “and I will fill this house with glory,” says the LORD Almighty”:*** As you respond to God and stand your ground firm then the Holy Spirit will transform you and lead you, and you will shine with everlasting glory as Paul declared, ***“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2Corinthians 3:18)***

***6- Yours will be God’s abundant provision, “The silver is mine and the gold is mine,” declares the LORD Almighty”:*** God as He leads you He will provide for you all the material and physical needs to establish you as He ordained for you.

***7- God will grant you peace, “And in this place I will grant peace,”:*** As you pursue in God’s plan then you will have peace of mind and peace around you, even your enemy and those who oppose God you will be able to manage and handle; Jesus promised that, ***“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27)***

***My Dear and Beloved:*** Truly and it was fulfilled to those builders who rebuilt the temple what God said, ***“The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house.”*** The rebuilt temple witnessed Jesus the living Word of God walking in it and witnessed the pouring of The Holy Spirit in the day of Pentecost. Your life as you respond to God’s call you will witness the living word of God instructing you and The Holy Spirit fill you and lead you step by step into the center of His perfect will as you agree to pray.

***My Prayer:*** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your encouraging word to me. Lord continues to heal my wounds \_\_\_\_\_ and remove my fears \_\_\_\_\_. Protect me Lord from the following dangers \_\_\_\_\_, grant me favour in the eyes of the people and provide all my needs, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name, Amen.*