

It's Not Enough to Get Out of Babylon

by David Wilkerson

God's ultimate goal for His church is to raise up a testimony that represents a holy remnant, a people who show the world a Christ of compassion.

Duration: 59:39

Scripture: Ezra 6:7, Ezra 6:14, Isaiah 48:20, Jeremiah 50:4-5, Haggai 1:6-14

Topics: "Babylon"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher criticizes the trend of showcase charities that are primarily focused on raising money for airtime and advertisement. He warns that ministers will be held accountable for not following through and not having a genuine purpose behind their actions. The preacher emphasizes the importance of giving and being a channel for God's blessings, but also warns against becoming consumed by self-interest and neglecting the needs of others. He highlights the need for the church to prioritize God's interests and be prepared to be a testimony in the darkest days to come.

Transcript

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None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. It's not enough to get out of Babylon. To get out of Babylon.

You know the story, of course, that after 70 years the prophet's voice was heard among the Jews in Babylon. Go forth out of Babylon and flee, Isaiah 48, 20. Jeremiah came along and what a prophetic voice his was.

In those days and in that time Israel and the children of Judah together will go forth and weeping. They shall go and seek the Lord, their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces through the word.

Remove out of the midst of Babylon. That's Jeremiah 50, 4, 5 and 8. Jeremiah cried out in chapter 5, flee out of the midst of Babylon and deliver every man his soul. Be not cut off in her iniquity.

You know from church history that approximately 42,000 men and their dependents fled out of Babylon and they returned to Jerusalem with great weeping and supplication Their hearts were broken for God.

They returned to the Lord with all their hearts. Immediately they restored the altar.

They instituted the daily sacrifices. And here we have a picture of a people now completely out of Babylon. They've come out of an idolatrous system.

They've come out of apostasy. They've come out of the wickedness of that age. They're separated unto God and they represent a holy remnant, a righteous holy remnant that had been stirred and moved upon and they have come out.

They've come out of the dead religiosity. They've come out of all those things that had hindered their spiritual growth. They were a separated people unto God.

Now, God's goal for these people is not just separation. And I want to make a statement and I want you to hear it in your soul. God's ultimate goal for His church is not simply separation from the world.

It is not just saying, I came out of a dead church. Many of you have come out of a dead Babylonian system. You came out of something that brought death to your soul.

You were down. You were cast down. Many of you were living a double life.

You were hooked on pornography. You watched filthy television. Your mind was corrupted.

And you were not growing in the Lord. And you heard a call. God was stirring you.

And you wanted to be among Christians of like precious calling. And God brought you out. I know I'm not speaking out of just a denomination.

I'm speaking out of something that brought death to you. And now you're separated. And now you can say honestly, I believe I'm growing.

I believe I have a heart for God. And I've been separated from the world. But it's not enough to be able to say, as the Jews did as they were in Israel, worshiping at the altar, back to the daily sacrifices, a heart turned to God, we have arrived.

This is God's ultimate goal. Separation from sin, out of Babylon, now given unto God. But you see, there was a testimony in Jerusalem that was lying in ruins.

The testimony of God. You see, the temple represented the presence of God. And when everything was lined up in God's divine purpose, God came down in that tabernacle, in that temple.

And there was something about it awesome. People like the Queen of Sheba would come and watch Solomon go to the temple. And it took a breath away, that the presence of God, and the reverence and the awe that these people had.

But you see, sin caused God to turn from the temple. The testimony was laying in ruins. And in that economy of Israel, the testimony of God was represented by a restored temple, where God's presence was manifested.

But God had told them to come out of Babylon, not just to get away from the wickedness of that corrupted city and society, but God called them to go to Jerusalem to raise up a testimony. To restore, to build his house. That was their first calling.

Go to Jerusalem, rebuild my house, take my interest upon you first. Your interest comes secondary, my interest comes first. And God stirred the hearts.

He stirred the heart of Joshua, the priest. He stirred the heart of Zerubbabel, the prince. And he stirred the heart of the people.

And they went with great vigor and built the foundations, but opposition began to set in, and they began to lose heart. And for sixteen years that temple stands ignored. And a thousand excuses came to mind why they couldn't continue the work of God.

Now folks, I want you to hear the story of Haggai tonight, this prophetic message, because it's very vital to this church and to all of us, in light of what God's been saying in the past five or six weeks, about building his house, about putting his interest first, about getting a burden for the homeless, a burden for the poor and the needy, the cart people who push the carts, the beggars, and not just to sit here and to eat our morsel alone and to soak in all the blessings on ourselves. But God is saying the same thing to us that he was saying to the Jew. I didn't call you just to separation.

I didn't call you just to holiness. I didn't call you just to praise me and to worship me. Yes, that's very vital.

That's the heart of it. But he said, I called you out to put you in a place, to put you in a place to prepare you, to use you, to raise up my testimony. And beloved, that's why I believe God raised up this church, as he is doing with many churches around the world, because there is a testimony that lies in total ruin.

There's a testimony that has absolutely been ruined. We have not shown the world a Christ of compassion. Do you know what the world has seen of Jesus in the past 15 years? Through Christian television most of all.

Church has put before the people ministers whose wives are dripped in diamonds and gold, ministers of television who are chauffeured around in stretch limos, and multi-million dollar recreation centers. And we have placed before the world a Christ of riches and wealth and prosperity, of begging and pleading for men's visions and men's empires. And consequently the temple or the testimony of Christ has laid in ruin.

And God is calling a church and a people in these last days, to rebuild the true testimony of who Christ is. That he hears the cry of the poor. That it's not made up of rich men robbing God's saints, to create their own dreams and their own visions and their own empires.

That there is a loving Christ who cares. There's a loving Christ who hears the heart cry of the needy, the poor, the homeless. John, no clapping please.

John in Revelation 18 cried out to a New Testament church, Babylon is falling. Come out of her my people that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. I've been preaching that message for 12 years now, about coming out of Babylon.

Babylon representing a backslidden society, in collusion with an apostate church, an apostate people. That's the Babylonian system and the message is come out of her my people, don't be a part of that. Now, there is a growing remnant, a holy remnant now, separating themselves.

There's a call of the Holy Ghost all over the land and around the world today. It's a sovereign work. God awakening.

I see it among young pastors especially. I was up till almost midnight last night talking to two young pastors, and almost every day of the week now I'm hearing from young pastors. Brother Bob, Pastor Bob and Pastor Don, are ministering to young pastors especially, whose hearts are burning, and yearning for holiness and righteousness, and to go deeper in the Lord.

They know that in these days the games are all over. The ego has to go, and the competition has to go, and the only thing that can be left is, is a man broken before God who hears the word of the Lord. Now, we have a people, multitudes that have come out of Babylon, out of the deadness and corruption and apostasy.

But you see, God is trying to say something to us, and I believe this is where the prosperity, so-called faith prosperity gospel got off the track. I believe that this, that particular gospel started out with some very pious godly men. And they said, there's got to be more to it than the deadness that they saw in the church.

And God really awakened. Many of them were lay people who were awakened. And they began to see that God wanted to bless His people.

God wanted to put resources in their hands, for a purpose. That purpose, and you'll find, I find it in every single book, all of the tracts, all the literature of the so-called prosperity gospel, you see it in the early days. God wants to bless you to be a channel of resources to reach the poor, the needy, the destitute.

God wants to pour out His blessings upon us, so that we can give it. But you see, something happened. There's something in human nature.

Once we get our hands on resources, once God begins to bless, if we don't immediately, instantly begin to give it out, we set goals for ourselves. And here's what's happened to the prosperity gospel in this last hour. I believe God was saying something.

God was trying to raise up a testimony. He was trying to prove that His Son, Jesus, in the darkest days to come, a depression coming upon the land, that there would be a church prepared, that believed God for resources, believed God for an anointing, but a people God could trust, that would not keep these resources and consume them on themselves, but give it, so that Jesus in the last days would be seen as a Christ, who could do what no other government could do, what no society could do, Jesus could do through His church. And so what's happened? God began to bless, and they began to set goals.

Well, if I reach this goal, then I'm in a place to give more to God. The only trouble is we kept upping the goal. You see, we kept upping the ante.

Lord, when my investments come through a little more, maybe when I get my Mercedes, then I begin to release the money to God. The truth is the money was never released. There was no burden for missions, no burden for the poor.

It was consumed on themselves. It was consumed in supersonic airplanes. And big projects.

And then, what came forth were showcase charities, that were just showcases, to raise money for airtime. And when the judgment day comes, every one of us as ministers are going to answer for showcasing and not following through. And not having something behind it, other than something there to advertise, and to have a hook to get the money out of the wallet.

And many of you know that's true. Many of you have given your... I mean, you gave your food money to support the dream of some man. I hope you've learned some lessons from the preaching you've been hearing from this pulpit.

If you send any money to that kind of foolishness, I don't think you truly have been hearing what we're saying. And I say that lovingly. But you see, what the idea behind it is, Lord, just wait.

One of these days you're going to strike it rich. You're going to get a lot out of me. You keep blessing me, and you keep my money coming in.

One of these days, Lord, you're going to get a bundle. But God never gets the bundle. Because God intended for a flow to begin, and that flow didn't come.

It didn't come. It never has come. And now God's saying something to the church.

He said, this time I won't miss it. I won't allow it to be missed, because it's too late, and Jesus' coming is at the door. Now he's going to have a people that this prophet Haggai has so convicted me.

I'll tell you about it as we go on in the message. The prayer of God's people has always been, and it's very subtle, Oh God, if you bless me, the more you give me, the more I am able to give you. Now that sounds good, but I just don't think outside of a broken heart that that will ever work, and it has not worked with many, many Christians.

The Jews stopped building God's house for 16 years, and they said, I go to Haggai, first chapter, Haggai 1. There are only two chapters in this prophetic book. I'm going to begin to read verse 1. In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai, the prophet unto Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, unto Joshua, the high priest, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. The time is not ripe.

You see, only the foundation has been laid up to this time, and they stopped. The reason that they stopped, now listen closely, their harvest was failing. The economy was failing.

Now we're going to see why that was happening, but the funds were drying up, and the future looked very bleak. They did not have resources at this time. They said, Look, we barely have enough.

We barely have enough for our own sustenance and our families. We just don't have the resources. This is not economically correct time to build God's house.

This is not the time to take on this heavy project. And it was a very, very expensive project, and I'm sure somebody came up with the thought, Well, look, Solomon, with all of his riches, burdened the people. When he built the first temple, he had all of David's resources.

He was blessed beyond any man on earth. They brought him gold from all over the world. And even then, they came to him and said, Our burden is heavy.

Now, it wasn't the temple that burdened the people. These were all the false temples, the Astaroth and all of the other gods that burdened and taxed the people. But their thinking is, Now, wait a minute.

If Solomon, with all of his wealth, can't do it, and we're going down financially, how can we go on? There was opposition. They had a thousand excuses. This is not the right time to go on.

Now, God understands that. He knows we don't have the money. He knows that this can't possibly be the time.

This is not the right time. We know it's a godly vision. God told us to do it.

But this is not the time. And they stopped building. They stopped the interest of God.

Another stone was laid. And I want you to go on with me now to verse 3. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O you to dwell in your sealed houses? And this house lie waste. Now, look at me, please.

You know what they had been doing in the 16 years up to the moment Haggai steps on the scene? They stopped building God's house because the economy was collapsing. Their fields were laying waste. They had all their wages.

It's like putting money in a bag with holes in it. The same bag that you have. You put money in it and it goes in one way and out ten.

And yet, they had managed, all of them, to build fine houses for themselves without considering the economy, without considering the opposition. And sealed here means a fine-carved wainscoting. He said, You've wainscoted your house.

You've got fine carvings in your house. You're beautifully furnished. And for 16 years, you say, It's not time for God's house to be built.

It's not time for God's interest. Yet what you wanted, you went out and got. I think you're getting hit while I'm under conviction.

And God spanked literally, literally put me on my face. And it'll unfold as we go a little further. You see, these people could not get enough for themselves.

They did not consider any opposition whatsoever and they built fine houses. And Haggai comes along and he says, Is this your theology? That this is not the time for God's interest. This is not time to step up by faith and do what I commanded you to do.

And yet, you can go home to your fine houses with your lovely furniture and all that you have and you're comfortable and you say, Well, God understands. Is this your theology? That you can buy what you want, do what you want. If you want what you want, you go get it.

You don't consider anything else. You get it. But when you think of my work, it's too costly, too expensive.

This is not the right time. The future's too dark. How do we undertake such a huge project when we can't even make ends meet ourselves? Let's do it, but let's just wait.

Isn't it amazing they found the money, the time, the resources to build their own houses, to do their own thing? And I'm sure they said, Surely God expects me to care for my family. He's a good God. We love Him.

As soon as we get our needs fulfilled, as soon as we get our families established, then we'll get busy on God's house. I want you to look at verse 4. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your sealed houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways. He said, I want you to stop.

The prophet's saying, I want you to think about something now. He said, I want to show you what happens to people who put off obeying the command of God. Now beloved, the time to obey God is when a prophetic word comes and the revelation comes and we receive it.

When God speaks through revelation, when the prophetic word comes and God says, act, move, He expects no delay, no excuses, because we're going to see, He said, all the silver and gold is mine. Everything I own anyhow. God doesn't consider the economy.

He doesn't consider anything. There are no considerations other than His word. When He says, do it, He says, I expect you to do it.

I expect you to obey Me. No excuses, no delays. And He said, if you do, I'm going to show you.

And what He's saying, look at the past years. In fact, I was reading, Calvin believes that this stretches back as much as 15 years. Some of the remnant, all the way back, for all these years, they were building the foundation and then stopped for 15, almost 16 years.

He believes this was the pattern. And here it is. You have so much and bring in little.

Verse 6. You eat, but you have not enough. You drink, but you're not filled with drink. You clothe you, but there is none warm.

And he that earneth wages to put them into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. He said, now, look this way, please.

He's explaining something inexplicable that was happening inside. Now, literally, this did happen. God blew on their blessings and He wilted them.

And I'll tell you, when we don't obey God, He blows on our blessings and He withers them. And there's an inner withering that takes place. We can have all the blessing of God.

We can have the glory of Jesus in this house. But if we don't obey Him when He speaks to us. And Pastor Bob spoke exclusively on that this morning, powerfully.

And God's speaking it to our hearts again tonight. He said, when I tell you to take on this burden of mine and to build my testimony, my house. I know that in these last days, this body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

And He's the builder. He's building something. But, folks, if we are stone upon stone, if we are built together as this building, this temple of God in these last days, Jesus being the head of this house, then we're going to reflect His nature.

We're going to reflect who Jesus is. And Jesus is loving. He's caring.

He's giving. We're going to... That still is going to happen to us. We're going to be just a channel.

We're going to show the world a Jesus who cares and who is loving. But, you know what happens? God says, I'm going to call for drought upon you. I'm going to call for a drought.

I want you to look at verse 11. And I called for a drought upon the land, and the mountains, and the corn, the new wine, the oil, upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and men, and cattle, upon all the labor of the hands. He said, I called for a drought.

And, folks, this literally happened, but He's describing, and the way it's applicable to us, He's describing what happens, a curse, a little curse that comes upon a people who put off the commandments of the Lord, who put off obeying God when He speaks prophetically to our hearts. And we just say, well, this is not the time. And we begin to justify our delay.

We begin to lean on excuses. And we say, oh, God understands. No, God does not understand our delaying when He speaks so clearly to our hearts.

He expects us to hear and obey. And when we don't, something happens. Something in the heart happens.

There's an unexplainable emptiness. There's a coldness. He said, you are cold, but there's still a chill on you.

There's something very chilling. There's a boredom that sets in. And we become self-introspective when we begin to get focused on our problems.

We don't see the need of a dying city anymore. We're talking about our little family, our little problems. We become introverted.

And we dwell on our own little problems. And we spend all of our time and our money and our resources on ourselves. We start out white.

We get the foundation up. And then the devil comes in and succeeds in getting our eyes on ourselves. And God says, no, I will not have that.

He said, there's something that's happened to you. Look back and center your ways. Look what's happened in the last 15 years since you stopped putting my interests first and your interests have become first and foremost and paramount in your mind.

He said, look what's happened. He said, you're so much and you bring in so little. Now, I know what that's like to do so much for God and feel so unfinished.

To work so hard and feel like I'm not getting anywhere. To have a restlessness inside of me. To have something digging down inside and it's I can't scratch.

To love God with all my heart and soul and yet not to, there's a feeling I've not touched something that God wants. There's not a fulfillment. There's something I'm missing.

Now, I'm explaining what's happened to some of you right here now. You love the Lord, but you're not totally fulfilled. You're not totally satisfied in your Christian walk.

There's a spiritual drought that comes on you. A dryness, a deadness. While everybody around you is moving on in the Lord, there's an emptiness, a dryness.

And God said, I called for the drought. I called for it. Now, folks, this is not a message of wrath.

It's a message of love. And God called for the drought in love for his people. These were godly people and he loved them.

He said, I'm not going to stand by and let you get so absorbed in yourself and your own interests, your houses, your clothes, your needs. I will not let you get swallowed up in selfishness. So, I'm going to send a drought on you to save you from your selfishness, to save you, David, from going off into some obsession over here.

I love you too much and I put a burden on your heart and I have a mission for you to accomplish and I won't let you go. I love you too much and I'm going to let you get so restless, so empty sometime and I'm going to let you feel so unfulfilled that you'll know you'll have to take notice. This is not natural.

This is not supposed to be. Consider your ways. Consider what's happening to you.

Consider it. Stop. Think.

This divine restlessness, this deep unknown dissatisfaction, this spiritual drought, it's God trying to destroy all self-interest. You know, I've experienced that over my ministry, that unexplainable sense of accomplishing so little, not of wrath, but of feeling God loving me, but I've not reached something in Him. Now, the wonderful thing about these people is that they believe God's messenger had God's message.

I want you to look at verse 13. Verse 13. Then speak Haggai, the Lord's messenger, in the Lord's message.

Now, that's a powerful statement. The Lord's messenger in the Lord's message. Look at me, please.

I don't believe God has ever sent a true awakening to a church or a people who didn't have a high regard for the messengers that He sent. I've known people who actually have come to this church. Now, I don't believe that they're here now.

Most of them have left. But there are times that the pastors that stand up here, we pour our heart out, spend a week seeking the face of God, come here with tears and brokenness, preaching a prophetic word, and add their hands full, I hear of God just as well. What I see and what I hear.

In fact, some have been backstage, said, well, who are you? I hear from God just as well. That's what they said to Moses just before they were swallowed up and destroyed by fire. But you see, unless there's a high regard, unless you can sit in a church and say, I know that I sit under men of God, I know that the man who stands there is God's messenger, he has God's message.

And I can look you in the eye tonight and tell you I'm God's messenger with his message tonight. And it's up to you to know whether or not that's true. That has to bear witness, but that bore witness of these people.

They said, you see, what they heard was, this is not the time. And if they had the spirit that a lot of people have had that I've seen come and go through these doors, they would come backstage and say, well, you

may say it's God's time, but I prayed and God said, this is not the time. But they listened to this man.

And this man has come from God and he says, it's time now to build my house, to put away your self-interest. Now I want to tell you something. He's not condemning them for their houses.

Not at all. He's not condemning them for being blessed. That's a byproduct of walking in covenant with God.

That happens naturally. You don't even give it a thought. All you do is give him thanks.

This is the end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two. He does want to bless you.

You think God's jealous of your house? God's looking around and saying, you've got it better than I've got it? What do you have that makes God jealous? What does God want that you have but your heart? No, God, that's not the point at all. God said, yes, that's fine. But he said, you should not have neglected my house, you put off my concerns.

And you focus all your time and effort resources on your own. He's just calling them back to the proper balance. And this is to put God's work first.

And here's God's messenger. And they laid aside all of their own thoughts. And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son, I'm not even going to try that one, governor of Judah, the spirit of Joshua, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people.

And they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts. Do you know it only... I wish I could preach like that man. It only took him 23 days to get him out of this hoping into the doing.

Only 23 days this man preaches this message and suddenly they have a heart and a mind to obey God and to get busy on the house of God. Just 23 days from a stirring to a doing. Now, I want to show you how quickly God moves in when we set our hearts to obey Him and put His purposes first in our lives.

Go to Haggai 2, verse 8. By the way, these people start getting excited about God's work. Give me your good eye and your good ear. I'll tell you what, there's nothing that blesses me more than to see people who love God getting excited, totally excited about the things that are happening in their church, what God's doing.

They talk it up to all their friends, they get on the telephone, they're not talking about their job, they're not talking about their clothes, they're not talking about their houses. Guess what's happening? I've been invited to go on the food truck and I'm going next Tuesday for four hours to pass out soup and donuts and put gloves on people's heads. I'm so excited.

To be excited about what God is doing, about the things of God. Well, that blesses me when I hear people just... They're not talking up to church while we've got the best church in New York. No.

That's abominable. God's moving in many, many areas. Just to be excited about what God is doing through His body.

These people got excited and they had made a commitment. And God got so excited He couldn't wait till they laid the first stone. My Lord is right.

You know what? Here comes the prophet. God says, go back to the people. They have a mind.

They're going to go through with the project. They're going ahead. They've made up their mind.

I see it. He said, get back quickly. And here He comes.

Not a stone has been laid yet but they've made a commitment. They're all getting excited. They're probably collecting the mortar.

They're getting all the things together. They're getting the people in order. Everything is being planned and they're all excited and God can't wait.

God gets excited. And He sends the prophet back and He said, tell them the silver is mine. The gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

He said, now I'm going to bless this people. Now, I will tell you something. New York City is running out of money.

It's already run out of money. New York City is literally bankrupt. And the banks are bellying up now.

Their S&L's are going bankrupt. And New York State is one of the worst financial conditions of any state outside of probably Massachusetts. Dear brother Cuomo.

Cuomo. Governor Cuomo. And he wants to be president of the United States.

He's broke. The state's broke. The city's broke.

The county's broke. The whole country's going broke. But God hasn't lost one ounce of wealth.

He said, the silver and gold is mine. It will be that so depressing. It will be that all the time.

God's wealth is never diminished. He said, the silver and gold is mine. Hallelujah.

And he's not going to trust it to the mayor or the governor. They've messed it up. He said, I'm going to trust it to people of God who are going to spend it for my glory.

Not on themselves, but to establish my testimony. I'm getting to shouting again. Yeah.

Hallelujah. You know what? God told Haggai to tell him. He said, you can work now because I'm with you.

Look at verse 4, chapter 2. Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord. Be strong, O Joshua, the high priest. Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord.

And work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts. According to the word that I've coveted with you when you came out of Egypt. So my spirit remaineth among you.

Fear you not. He said, don't look at the economy. Don't look at the future.

Don't look at anything like that. He said, keep your eyes on me. I'm with you.

Get to work because I'm with you. That's all you need. I am with you.

Glory to God. Folks, if we can be totally convinced and stand on our believers, God is with us. God said, don't be afraid.

God says, get to work. I'm going to work. I'm going to do everything.

I don't care. Lord, you told me to do it. I'm going to do it.

You have everything under control. You know what the Lord says? You tell them. I'm going to shake everything it can be shaken.

I'm going to shake heaven and earth. And I'm going to shake loose all the resources they ever needed. Now, I know that you'll find that in Hebrews.

And that speaks to the shaking of the last days. It speaks of the establishment of the messianic kingdom. But it also has an immediate application.

Verse 6. And thus saith the Lord of hosts. Yet once, it's a little while. In just a little while now.

He said, I've already told you. I've given you a promise. Silver and gold is mine.

And I'm going to start blessing you now. And now, he said, once in a little while. I'm going to shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land.

Now, that's the immediacy of the prophecy. The long range duality is in the second. Then I'll shake all nations.

And the desire of nations will come. That's the Messiah. But he's speaking that in the sixth verse.

He said, this is for you. I'm going to shake. And you know what he's talking about? He's talking about the kingdom of King Darius.

I'm going to shake. You see, up to this time. The local governor stopped the work.

The local government there. The governor wouldn't even sell them any local products. They were being hemmed in on all sides.

And for 16 years, they had been hampered in the work. Now that, you see. And all that's happened so far.

Is that they have committed themselves to put God's interest first. Now, why don't you go to Ezra 6th chapter and see the shaking. Ezra 6th chapter.

You'll see it fulfilled exactly to the letter. I got so happy reading this this afternoon. I was shouting in my study.

When you talk about God shaking things up. Ezra is prophesying during the same time period. There were three prophets.

All sent by God to awaken his people. As was described. Ezra 6, chapter 6. And I want you to start reading with me.

At verse 7. Just follow me. I'm reading from King James. Beloved.

Up to this time, they've been worrying about the economy. Where are we going to get the lumber? Where are we going to get all the things that we need? Where are we going to get it? Our neighbors won't even say hello to us. Our neighbors are cursing us.

All right. Verse 7. Let the work of the house of God. Now remember, this is coming from Darius the king.

God had shaken up the kingdom. He said, just a little while. And this is what the shaking is.

The first verse says, Darius the king made a decree. And you find they searched the rolls. And they found the history.

And here's the commandment that came forth. Let the work of this house of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build the house of God in his place.

Moreover, I make a decree. What you shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of the house of God. That of the king's goods, even of the tribute.

That's tax money. Be on the river forthwith. Forthwith.

Right now. Expenses be given unto these men that they be not hindered. And that they, and that which they have need of.

Both young bullocks and rams and lambs. For the burnt offerings of the God of heaven. Wheat, salt, wine, oil.

According to the appointment of the priests which were at Jerusalem. Let it be given unto them by day without fail. That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savors unto the God of heaven.

And pray for the life of the king and of his sons. Also I make a decree. That whosoever shall alter this word.

Let timber be pulled down from his house and be set up. Let him be hanged on it. And let his house be made a dunghill for this.

And the God. That's a shaking folks. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there.

Destroy all kings and people. That shall put to them. And to alter and to destroy this house of God.

Which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree. Let it be done with speed.

They wouldn't have had one of those resources. If they went on doubting. Doing their own thing.

The moment they made a commitment. Put God first. One stroke of the pen.

Every need was met. One stroke of the pen. That's what I heard today.

David obeyed God. And one stroke of the pen. Is all I have to do.

One stroke of the pen. That's incredible. Amazing what God did for this people.

Hallelujah. Well there's a little more to it. Look at verse 13.

Chapter 2. Verse 13. Haggai. Tell you what.

Let's go to verse 15. And now I pray you consider from this day and upward. From before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord.

Since those days were when one came to a heap of twenty mazes and there were but ten. He's describing what life was like for them before. He said you went and hoped for twenty.

You only got ten. You came to the press fat to drop fifty vessels. And out of the press there were but twenty.

I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail. And all the labors of your hands. Yet you turned not to me saith the Lord.

But consider now from this day and upward. From the four and twentieth. He said mark it on your calendar.

Even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid. Consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? Yea.

Is yet the vine? In other words he said you've not accomplished your work. You're just starting it. But from this day will I bless you.

The last sentence of that nineteenth verse. From this day will I bless you. He said mark it down.

Now beloved look at me please. And I want you to hear this very clearly. He said consider from this day on.

Consider it right now. Because you have set your heart. I'm going to fulfill you.

I'm going to take away that dryness. That emptiness. And I'm going to give you my truth.

Strength and life. And he said I'm going to make this a city of peace. And brother and sister that's the one great thing God does for people who step out in faith.

And put his work first. They are a people in a midst of turmoil that have absolute peace. They lay down at night.

They're not afraid of the war. Anywhere on the face of the earth. Who is Saddam Hussein to a people who are walking under the glory of God.

What is it when he says I will give you peace in this place. I'll put joy in your heart. I'll make you a happy people.

You'll rejoice when everything around you is fading away. You will be a different people. I'll bless you.

I'll bless you. Because you've set your heart to put my concerns first. Now I'll tell you why this chapter, this prophecy got a hold of me.

As you know. Just give me five or so more minutes. God's been moving on us in this church the past five, six weeks.

To fulfill Isaiah 58 and Matthew 25. Is this not the fast that I've ordained? It's not to abstain from bread but to share your bread. It's not to put on sackcloth but to clothe the naked.

He said this is the fast that I've ordained. That you'll be heard on high. And he said we're going to stand before him.

He said I was hungry. You fed me. Naked you clothe me.

Prison you visited me. And there's no way. I put that right out under the eyes of two young pastors last night.

And I said now how do you get by that? I said we can in our church. We've had to face that. That's literal.

You can't spiritualize it. God's interested in bodies. Presents your body as a living sacrifice.

As well as souls. He said you don't just tell them be warmed and filled and go. No, he said you give them what they need.

And God's put on this church pastors and its staff. And I believe this whole church is beginning to feel that burden. We have a truck being, a food truck, the raven truck that's soon going to be finished.

Equipped with kitchen and everything to invade these streets. And we've been praying and negotiating this week, Lord, Willing on a Hannah house for the homeless widows. Even in our choir, we have three or four just a few paychecks.

So if they lose their job, they're homeless. They're homeless. They're probably 20, 30 in this church right now.

If you lose your job within three months, you're homeless. You're absolutely homeless. You have no place to go.

No relatives. And we've heard from, we have a mother right now, for example, with two children in a city shelter. And just to care for our own body is going to take a great step of faith.

We're negotiating this week on a Timothy house. It would house probably 75 men. They're homeless men, drug addicts and others.

And God has called us to get a warehouse and to get food together and clothes and begin to reach out. And to show that Jesus did not call us just to sit in the four walls of this church. But to have that, to be encouraged in that, to be fed in Christ.

But then to go out and take that manna to the world. And you know, this past week, I started thinking of the challenge and it was so overwhelming. There are 90,000 homeless people here in New York already.

The numbers are growing every day. 15,000 people they claim living in the subways down below with the economy collapsing in the future. So black and the city agencies giving up.

There's total despair in the city agencies. One of the directors of a program said, her very words in New York Times today. I'm quoting her.

She said, a passion fatigue, a compassion fatigue has hit New York City. People are growing tired. They're becoming immune and isolated emotionally from all the suffering that's all around us.

There's a compassion fatigue. Just getting worse. I can't take it anymore.

That dare not happen to the church of Jesus Christ. That dare not happen to us. Because Christ is always bringing new life.

He's the rain that falls that waters the garden. And everything it touches springs to life. That's the way it's supposed to be.

But I started reading these reports. And then this past week, I happened to pick up New York Times. I'm going to have to quit reading the New York Times and all newspapers.

Because it's so frightening. And I was reading an article that was entitled, The Depression Has Already Come. And it was by a bankruptcy lawyer.

One of the top bankruptcy lawyers here in New York. And he said, in essence, New York City this time next year will be totally bankrupt. And he said, the total collapse of all real estate.

And he said, this is not the time to buy any real estate. Wait for a year and go to the bank and name your price. And it hit me.

All of a sudden I started saying, this is not the time. He's right. Let's wait a year.

Let's wait a year and we can get it half price. If we need a Hannah house, it will be half price. If we need the Timothy house, it will be half price.

Everything, warehouse, space, half price. And I got scared to death reading that article. So I called, Don was away, I called Brother Bob.

And I said, Bob. And I don't know what he thought. I said, Bob.

And I told him about the article. I said, I think maybe we ought to wait. I said, this is, the economy is collapsing.

And I really got cold feet. I got scared to death. And I called Joe Shukert, who's on our board.

He's been very gracious to this church. A man of means. And we had looked at a building that would be ideal for a Hannah house.

And he said, I'm going to pray about it and see what God puts on my heart in the way of help. And I called him up. And I said, Joe.

And I told him about this article. He didn't say anything. He just let me go on.

I said, I think maybe we ought to wait a year. And then you go to the bank and name the price for us. And he spanked me on the phone very lovingly.

And he doesn't know it. I don't think Joe's here tonight. I think he's in Washington.

In fact, he's having supper with Vice President Quayle today. And he said, Brother Dave, the only important thing, he said, the economy doesn't matter. He said, it's only, as God said, this is the place.

And if this is the place, it's the time God will provide the money. And my face was flushed red. And I said, I'm pastor.

I'm supposed to have faith. He's got more faith than I have. He has more faith in the little finger than I have in my whole body.

He said, Brother Dave, I'm praying. And I hung up the phone. And God said, you better get to your knees.

And I ran up to my study. And I laid down. I said, God, I'm scared.

This is so big. This city is so enormous. The needs are so overwhelming.

And, folks, I'm talking from having been out talking to these cart people that sleep on the streets. All the pastors, Don and Bob, all totally involved. We're not just preaching theology.

We've been on the streets. We're not just talking out of our heads. We're not in an ivory tower.

And I went to prayer. And God said, Go to Haggai. And I went to Haggai.

And, see, I had just ordered for my office new drapes. Had it painted, wallpapered. Brand new desk.

Gorgeous desk I'd ordered. And I picked this up. And it says, You're saying the time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.

But is it time for you, David, to dwell in your nice house? And my house lie waste? I threw that down. I mean, it just dropped. I said, Oh, God, that's me.

That's me. I confess before you that I failed God on it. I preached it to you and got your soul stirred up.

And I failed God. But God made me a promise. All I have to do is go back to that commitment.

I couldn't wait. That was right. I couldn't wait until Monday until the office opens.

So I could get on that telephone. And start getting back on the track. Making those calls and doing what God told us to do with Bob and Don and pastors and staff.

And I'll tell you what happens. And here's the prophetic warning God gave me. And I want you to receive it.

It's from the Lord right now. It's very, very important. Before I close.

If we don't step out and meet human need. If we don't get our eyes off how big the problem is. And just say we're going out and establish a testimony for Jesus.

And folks, you can't wait for the pastors to give you some project. It's going to your neighbor. It's going wherever you can.

It's giving the toys to the prisoners like we're doing the angel project. It's a, there's so many ways. There's an old, over on, what's that island over there? Ward's Island.

All of those elderly people, no one visits them all year long. Sitting there, wasting away, dying. Some of them in their 80s.

Bitter, old, no one to talk. And they just open up like little kids when you talk to them. Hospitals.

We have people going. The Lord's laid on our heart to start a home for AIDS victims. And we're looking at a building right now on 118th Street on 3rd Avenue.

To have 12, 15 beds for those that have been given up by the doctors. And they're sent. They have no place to go.

Some of them are on the streets with a little cardboard sign. I'm dying of AIDS. Now, some of them are hoaxes.

But some of them, when you see AIDS, you see them dying. They're 50 pounds. They've got a sign.

I have no place to go. We want to just go out and pick them up and take them to our AIDS home. And if we don't do, if we don't reach out, you know what's going to happen? This very thing that happened here.

There'll be a spiritual dryness. The pastors will get that empty feeling. The staff gets that bored feeling.

You will come to church and your interest will go inward rather than outward. And it will just be a sham. It would be a sham.

God's not going to let that happen. God said, I'm going to send my glory upon you. And I'm going to give you the resources.

And all you have to do is make the commitment and stick to it. Folks, we've made the commitment. We're going on in the name of Jesus.

Hallelujah. Now, one final application. Very quickly, please.

And God told me to say this. Up on the balcony here on the main floor. The final application of Haggadah prophets.

Some of you said, this is not the right time to surrender everything I have to Jesus. There's not time to give my life. I'll know when it's time to come to Jesus.

And some of you have been convicted and convicted. And you're saying, this is not the right time. And the reason you say that is because you've got some self-interest.

You're trying to make it first. You're trying to be successful first. You're trying to say, well, I haven't proved myself yet.

And you know if you give your heart to the Lord, He may ask you to surrender that thing that you focused on. And God right now is saying to you, no, this is the day of salvation. Today is the day of salvation.

You can't put it off anymore. You can't say, this is not the right time. The right time to lay everything down.

The right time to give everything to Jesus. Young man, young woman, dad, mother, whoever you are. The right time is tonight, right now.

This very moment on the clock is your time. You say, oh, I'll come. I know I will someday.

No, you won't. You'll get harder and harder. The more you put it off, the worse it'll get.

You will never come. God's calling some of you tonight perhaps for the last time. His grace will always be there, but your heart will be too hard to respond.

He's calling, and God spoke that clearly to my heart. I want you to stand. God spoke that very clearly to my heart.

There will be a number here tonight. A number of people who are saying, not yet. This is not the right time.

No, God is saying tonight's the time. Heavenly Father. Oh, Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit. Do what I can't do. Do what no man can do.

And that's to convict of sin and righteousness and judgment. Holy Spirit, go walk through the balcony. And through this main hall.

And speak to every one of us. Lord, there may be many here tonight. You told them to do something, and they keep putting it off.

And putting it off. They don't put off their own interest, but they've been putting off your interest. Something you told them to do, they've not done it yet.

Lord Jesus, don't let them fall into that drought. Don't call for a drought. I pray, Lord, you send the Holy Ghost and convict them.

And bring them to this altar tonight. Oh, God, don't let anyone put off that call of the prophet Haggai. Holy Spirit, move tonight.

Convict. If God's speaking to you. Up in the balcony, go to either exit on either side.

Come down any aisle. And you here in the main floor, get out of your seat and come. I'm going to ask God for a miracle tonight in your life.

That if you have been disobedient in some way. That God told you to do something, you've not done it. Or you put it off.

God's dealing with you. You may be putting off dealing with a habit. I don't know what it is or sin.

Deal with it now and say, Jesus, I hear what you say. Don't put it off. Tonight is the night.

Up in the balcony, here in the main floor. Come on, step out. You have experienced what I've described tonight.

A kind of an emptiness inside. And you're not fulfilled. There's a dry emptiness inside.

Raise your hand, please. You've experienced that. The very thing that the prophet's talking about.

Alright. Do you know the way now? It's clearly defined by the scripture and by the prophet here tonight of Haggai. And he's saying to you, he's saying to me.

The moment you make a commitment. God can read your mind. I've heard people make loud commitments.

But they didn't make it from the heart. I've seen other people never said a word but their heart was being changed. God was getting a hold of them.

Let the Holy Ghost get a hold of you right now while I pray. God, I pray you get hold. Take hold.

Take root. Lord, that it not just be an emotional thing. That it be a life-changing experience right now as we confront you right now.

God, you're confronting us about our selfishness. About our self-centeredness. God, you're confronting us about making our lives count.

And Lord, the moment we make that commitment. To lay down our sin and to live for you. And put your interest first.

Then Lord, you'll open the doors. You'll provide. You'll satisfy every longing of our heart.

You'll meet every need. Now raise both hands if you will please. And pray this prayer with me right on your heart.

Oh Jesus. I stand before you to humble myself. Deal with me.

Convict me. You've stirred me Lord. And I respond.

Forgive me. For being selfish. And doing my own thing.

I want to do your work. I want to put you first. Cleanse me.

And heal me. Put your joy in my heart. And give me your peace.

And open the door for me. And use my life. If you believe God can answer that.

Just thank him in your own words. Lord, I thank you. I praise you.

I worship you. I give you glory. Praise him with your own voice.

Right now, thank him. Say, Jesus, thank you for hearing me. I believe that you hear my cry.

It doesn't take God all night. When your heart is prepared. Hallelujah.

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