

Consider God's Ways

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Date: 14 November 2021

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[0 : 00] The following message was given at a Sunday celebration at Trinity Grace Church in Athens.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! Turn to the New Testament, the beginning, go left, and you'll run into it pretty quick.

It's a minor prophet, not in the sense that its message is minor, it's its length. Haggai, the book of Haggai, we're going to read chapter 1. Got my watch off.

You heard about the little boy that asked his mom when the preacher took his watch off. He said, Mom, what does it mean when the preacher takes his watch off? And she said, absolutely nothing, son.

That's not true. I'm going to... All right, you don't want to laugh. That's okay. That's fine. I won't tell any more jokes. This will be dead serious the rest of the time. It's going to be a religious meeting now.

[1 : 16] Haggai chapter 1. This is God's Word inspired in Aaron. We're going to read the whole chapter and then look at it. So it's going to be important you're able to access it.

In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel, the son of Shiltiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

Thus says the Lord of hosts. These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.

Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet. Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies in ruins?

Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. You have sown much and harvested little.

[2 : 32] You eat, but you never have enough. You drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm.

And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes. Thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house that I may take pleasure in it. And that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

You looked for much and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why, declares the Lord of hosts, because of my house that lies in ruins while each of you busies himself with his own house.

Therefore, the heavens above you have withheld the dew and the earth has withheld its produce. And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast, and on all their labors.

[3 : 54] Verse 12, Then Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Jehoshadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him, and the people feared the Lord.

And then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message, I am with you, declares the Lord.

And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Jehoshadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people.

And they came and worked on the house of the Lord, of hosts their God, on the 24th day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

Lord, bless your holy word this morning. This message of Haggai confronts neglecting God.

[5 : 14] It confronts sinful self-indulgence. It's a call for all of God's people to examine themselves and repent if they're self-indulgent, if they're neglecting God's purposes for their lives.

But let me say from the outset, this is not meant to be a corrective message. It's not like Walt called me. These people are self-indulgent, man. That is not what happened.

In fact, it's just the opposite. Walt would talk to me on a regular basis, just commend this church. You guys are sacrificing. You're doing a wonderful job. And so it's not meant to be corrective.

It's just good for us to hear the message of Haggai. It's good to go back and hear and think about these things. And mainly, we want to leave today hearing this message, I am with you.

So it's a good news book. And it's helpful to look at because in the world we live in, it is easy to neglect God, isn't it?

[6 : 27] It is so easy to be sinfully self-indulgent, to focus on our own personal interests. Have you ever asked yourself, why is that the case?

Why do we live in a culture where it's so easy to neglect God? I received the latest issue this summer of my favorite theological journal, *Ranger Rick*.

And I was overjoyed to find a whole article on the periodical cicadas we experienced in East Tennessee this summer.

You may have already forgotten them, but I doubt it. They were quite an experience. And *Ranger Rick* said, we were lucky because we got to attend the world's best Buzzy Bug concert for free.

We got to meet. We were lucky. We got to meet these big-eyed musicians in person. The sound, you remember the sound? We didn't need Scott Trueblood.

[7 : 38] We had, they don't need amplification. They don't need a tech team. It was impressive. There are several broods of these cicadas. This year's was brood 10.

Each brood is made up of young cicadas. They live underground until it's time to emerge, to come out. Some broods emerge after 13 years.

Ours came out after 17 years. They all come out all at once, all in the same time, all at the same location, and it's by the billions.

Were they in Athens? I think they were. Yeah. They lived underground as nymphs since 2004. They emerged.

They shed their skins. They live for a brief season. They start all that noise singing. They lay some eggs, and then they die. And then the eggs hatched at the end of the summer, and these new young cicadas drop to the ground.

- [8 : 50] They dig back into the dirt, and then they wait another 17 years. The next time they come out, 2038. I'll be as old as Buddy Luster by the time the next brood comes out.
- Here's my point. I work alone, buddy. What can be known about God, what can be known about God is plain.
- God has shown it. His invisible attributes, His eternal power, His divine nature. We see something in nature, and this common grace, this natural revelation.
- We can perceive something about God by what He's made. We're accountable to Him based on this.
- We're without excuse, the Bible says. Those cicadas are no cosmic accident. I disagree with Ranger Rick. We're not lucky. Luck is a pagan concept.
- [10 : 03] We have a different worldview because we believe in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and every human being has a sense that there is a God unless they suppress it.
- The world's best buzzy bug concert reveals God's invisible attributes. I have to admit, when I read Ranger Rick, I was praising the Lord.
- Isn't it amazing? Why does God make us smile with the noise? Why does the Lord not create one kind of cicada?
- There are 3,000 species of cicadas. Why? It reveals something about God. He's immense. He's bigger than us.
- This show this summer was meant to amaze us, but it's all lost because we suppress it.
- [11 : 05] In our culture, we're told that God didn't create the heavens and the earth, and we miss it. We suppress the truth. We're told that in the beginning, nothing created something.
- Nothing came up with 3,000 species of cicadas. I don't have faith for that. And that's why God neglect is encouraged.
- Those cicadas tell us something about the glory of God. He made an amazing world, complete with big-eyed musicians and buzzy bug concerts for a reason, and we suppress it.
- We live in a God-denying culture, and Haggai has a message for us. One commentator said this, part of Haggai's task was to help the community find a new way to understand their identity in a world where so much had changed.
- Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, we'll talk about this, Judah had an expansive territory, a king in the line of David on the throne, ensuring some measure of political and social autonomy, and a relatively prosperous economy.
- [12 : 30] With the conquest of Judah by the Babylonian army and the subsequent conquest of the Babylonian empire by the Persians, those who chose to return to Jerusalem found themselves in a radically different world.
- So these, the people that Haggai is prophesying to, they were, it was like the whole world around them had changed.
- Do you feel that way? You feel like your world's changed in the last few years where you live? We are living in a radically different world than the one I was born into.
- And it seems like it's changing so fast. Haggai's message reminds us, it helps us understand our identity in a world that is radically different.
- It tells us we're God's people. And he says to us this morning through this book, I am with you. The Lord is present this morning.
- [13 : 46] And that's who we are. We're going to unpack this with three considerations. Number one, consider our ways. Number two, consider God's ways.

And finally, consider the second coming of Christ if we have time. I just have two hours, so I'm going to have to hurry. Number one, let's consider our ways. The book of Haggai is two chapters long, but it consists of four messages or four prophecies that he delivered.

This first one that we looked at here is an exhortation to build the Lord's house. Has these sobering words of warning.

The Lord is making clear that this adversity they're experiencing is from him. It's his discipline because they're apathetic about his purposes. Jerusalem was first invaded by the Babylonians in about 606 B.C.

And at that time, many people were taken away and exiled to Babylon. Several other invasions occurred until Jerusalem was completely conquered and burned in 586 B.C.

[15 : 01] The temple was destroyed. The final deportation of the Jewish people took place. Everyone taken to Babylon. The Jews stayed in Babylon for decades.

And then in 538 B.C., the Babylonians themselves were conquered by the Persians. And then this amazing work of providence took place where the Persian ruler now, who now rules Jerusalem, issued a decree allowing the Jews to return.

And he even promised to help finance the building program. The rebuilding of the temple. And so in 536, 50,000, approximately 50,000 Jewish people, the remnant, made the 900-mile journey from Babylon back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

They had a daunting task. First, they had to clear away the rubble of all the destruction, as you would imagine. They had to rebuild everything, including their own homes.

It's easy to imagine their mission was physically, emotionally, spiritually exhausting. They returned. They started to rebuild the temple.

[16 : 26] But over time, they began to neglect the mission, what God had called them to do. They made excuses. They became self-indulgent.

It was at this time that the Lord sent the prophet Haggai and his contemporary Zechariah. sent them to the Jewish people, the remnant, rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, and he's urging them.

And I think he's urging us this morning. We're hearing God's word this morning. Urging us, persevere. Don't give in to self-indulgence.

Don't neglect God's purposes for your life. That's the word of the Lord. It was for them, the original audience, but it applies very well to us. Fulfill the mission the Lord has given you.

Verse 2, they had begun to say, yeah, now's not the time to rebuild the temple. But the Lord then, in verse 4, asked, okay, you're saying it's not time to build my house.

[17 : 37] Verse 4, is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses? Okay? That's supposed to say very, very, very, very nice houses.

Paneled houses. Is it time for you to dwell in paneled houses, but it's not time to rebuild my house? Verse 9, he says to them, my house that lies in ruins, this is the word of the Lord, my house, while each of you are busy with his own house, they're neglecting God, they're indulging themselves, and two times, verse 5 and verse 7, he hits the pause button and says, consider your ways.

And every one of us in here, if you're a believer, if you're a Christian, you serve the Lord, if you're following Christ, you should hear the word of the Lord, consider your ways.

Consideration number one, your ways. The amazing thing is, these people have been allowed by the king of the Persians to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

It's supposed to take your breath away. It's all through Scripture. You read about this event, and you'll come back to it, and even in the New Testament, it's supposed to take your breath away what God has done in his providence.

[19 : 11] When you read about Cyrus saying, I have an idea. I'm going to let you go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. You're supposed to go, it's an amazing act of God's power.

And a number of Persian kings come along, and they support the return, and they pay for the building of the temple. That'll help your building fund when you have kings giving to it.

They weren't lucky. It was God's providence. It was God's power and his sovereignty on display in pagan kings.

The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and he turns it wherever he wants, and that's what he did. And he did it for the good of his people, and it should amaze the readers of the Bible.

It should amaze us. And the Lord makes it clear in verse 8, no matter what their excuses are, their opinions, this is what they're to do. Go up to the hills, bring the wood, build the house, that I may take pleasure in it, and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

[20 : 23] It's the house of the Lord, verse 8. Verse 9, God calls it my house. You may remember when Jesus was 12, he got separated from his parents, and they couldn't find him for three days.

Remember that? When they finally found him, he was in the temple. And they're like, son, how could you do this to us? And he's amazed. You didn't know I would be in my father's house?

Go up to the hills, bring wood, and build the house that I may take pleasure in it, and that I may be glorified.

That's our calling, that's our calling, isn't it? That's what we want to do. We want to find out what pleases the Lord, and then pour our lives into it. And the Lord says, go do this.

This is your mission, that I may take pleasure in it, and I may be glorified. Nothing would have brought them greater joy. Nothing would have fulfilled them more, made them more content.

[21 : 33] There is nothing that would have made them happier. There is nothing that will make you happier than serving the Lord, bringing him pleasure, and glorifying him.

Nothing will make you happier. This was a moment, this was an opportunity for these folks to experience the joy that only comes from God.

The mission, having a mission, is an amazing gift of God's grace. And here they are, neglecting God, and indulging themselves.

The Lord could have chosen anyone. He chose this little remnant of Jewish people. This is what he was doing in his world. This isn't plan B.

The one true God was at work, and he's stirring the hearts of kings, and they're indulging themselves.

[22 : 34] This is written down for our instruction, and we want to consider our ways. We want to take our soul to task. We want to take inventory. We're entrusted with the gospel.

Our calling is to build the temple too. Christ is the temple. According to the New Testament, those who are in Christ by faith are united together, and they are the body of Christ.

They are the church. They are the temple where God's spirit lives. This is the temple that we want to see built.

Building his temple today doesn't have to do with building any building. A building's a great asset to have. But it's not the temple they were rebuilding.

The temple is built as the gospel is preached, and the Lord gives the gift of faith, and people come to Christ, and they're united together. Mark Dever says this, Do not read Haggai and think primarily of a building program for a church meeting house.

[23 : 51] The only time I ever heard the book of Haggai preached in my own life, Preacher wanted to begin a building program. I agree that the book might have some third-order implications about church buildings, but please understand that church buildings today should not be acquainted with the Old Testament temple.

As soon as I read that, I thought, I'm going to use this for a building fund, because that's the kind of guy I am. I know Mark Dever. I love Mark Dever.

I agree with every sentence of that. But there is a third-order implication we will consider today. The question remains, consider our ways. Are we neglecting our mission?

Are we indulging ourselves? Second consideration, consider God's ways. Chapter 1, verse 9, you look for much, behold, it came to little.

You brought it home, he says, I blew it away. I titled this message, Blown Away. I blew it away. I've called for a drought, verse 11, on the land.

[25 : 03] I've called for a drought on the land, and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, what the ground brings forth on man and beast, all their labors. Verse 13, I am with you, declares the Lord.

He stirs up their spirit, they repent. Notice, these are God's ways. These are not our ways. So it's kind of the Lord to reveal to us His ways.

The Lord has ways. We have ways. And here's what He's doing. Sinful self-indulgence, adversity, discipline.

Repentance, I am with you. Stirring their spirits. Joy, we learn, in Ezra and Nehemiah, which is the historical account of this whole season.

The people rebuilt the temple with joy because of the Lord is with them, because He's working in their soul. What the Lord is doing is on the inside.

[26 : 10] We see change in people. That's something the Lord is doing. We see fruit. It's something on the inside. Years ago, I had all my toenails removed.

Because real men don't need toenails. It was, you might have guessed, painful. Then the doctor told me to soak my toes in Epsom salt.

So, we had a, a tub, and I was doing what the doctor told me, which I'm really good at. and I poured the whole container in.

It was like a half gallon of Epsom salts into the, into the bathtub. And when I put my feet in there, it really hurt. And, I remember screaming something like this.

Ah! Ah! And, my wife Sherry coming in and saying, you know, I don't think it's supposed to hurt that bad.

[27 : 12] I don't think this is right. And I was, you know, no. This is what the doctor said to do. I found out later you were only supposed to put two tablespoons in. So, I had no toenails, ten raw toes, and literally, I'm pouring salt in the womb.

Later, I took my one-year-old daughter to the grocery store while I'm still recovering. And I had one of those grocery carts, you know, with the kryptonite wheels on them. And I'm walking along and I went by the cereal I was supposed to get and when I came back, I pulled it over my toe.

And I was in an aisle in the grocery store and there was a nice lady standing there. When I rolled over my toe, I went something like I did in the bathtub.

Ah! And you can imagine her response was like, you know, pal, I'm sure that hurt, but did it really hurt that bad? Is that really necessary?

Had she known, she would have been more empathetic. my point is there was something hidden from sight.

[28 : 29] There was something she saw. Had she known what was hidden from sight, she would have fully supported what she saw. That's the way it is with God's ways.

When God is at work, you don't see it. You can't tell what's underneath that shoe. You can't see it. You don't know. And you will see, though, the fruit of the Spirit.

You will see God's providence. providence. And we're wise to consider God's providence in the midst of adversity. It's good to consider God's providence.

God's ways are such that we don't see them. We see His fruit. But it's His Spirit at work. The chief sin in the book of Haggai is the lack of passion for the mission.

Their hearts had grown cold. They were selfish. And what they needed was the Spirit of the Lord to move and work in their hearts.

[29 : 42] Zechariah, Haggai's contemporaries, said this. It's famous words. This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord.

Remember that? Who are you, O great mountain, building fun? Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone, the finishing of the temple, amid shouts of grace, grace in the Old Testament.

Grace, grace to it. That's what we'll do one day when we dedicate the building here. We will say grace. The Lord stirs hearts.

Consider His ways. Through the Spirit, Ezra 6, 22 says, they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy for the Lord had made them joyful.

The Lord had made them joyful. They feared the Lord. They trusted God in responding to Haggai's prophecies prophecies in Zechariah's.

[30 : 55] He convicted them of sin. Verse 5, consider your ways. You have so much, harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough.

You drink. This is God, this is their, what's going on in their life. Consider your ways. You look for much. Verse 9, and behold, it came to little.

And when you brought it home, I blew it away. I've called for a drought. Verse 11, one commentator, prices were high, wages low. It seemed as if their money just dropped through holes in their pockets.

And it's like a shoe covering a bad toe. They couldn't see what was really going on was God's providence. Consider God's way. It isn't always that every time there's adversity, it's because of human sin.

We know that to be the case because we have the book of Job. We have Paul's thorn. We have the cross of Christ. But sometimes, we're wise to be careful students of God's providence because sometimes our trials and difficulties do indeed reveal our sin, our self-indulgence.

[32 : 07] And Haggai is bringing the word of the Lord to the people of God. The Lord is acting to convict them of their selfishness. Their priorities reveal a failure to serve the God who has done so much for them.

They're not living for His glory. They're living for themselves. Charles Spurgeon, if men are selfish, keep their wealth to themselves and rob God of His portion, they shall not prosper.

Or if they do, no blessing. No joy, no contentment will come with it. So let's pause. Think about money.

We could apply this to a lot of different things. We could apply it to time, but there is no time to do that. So we'll just focus on money and ask the question, you know, is our lack of generosity leading to financial difficulties?

Or is our lack of generosity leading to a lack of contentment? if you are prospering financially. I'm not a TV preacher here.

[33 : 14] We've tuned in to the Haggai show. He says, consider your ways. He says, consider God's ways. Consider how you give.

Again, Mark Dever, what if He created the wealth He has given you specifically to do good things in His creation? But instead of being a highway of blessing, you become the dead end for the wealth He gives.

Why would He give you any more? Give careful thought to your ways. That's the message of Haggai. Where does your discretionary money go? So, I do want to talk about the building fund right now.

I do want you to consider sacrificially giving to the building fund. I could not be more excited.

The Lord has provided a wonderful place to meet. And He has numerous times for your church. It's going to help to have your own building. It's not the temple, but it's a blessing.

[34 : 27] So, consider that. Next Sunday, Walter's going to receive an offering for the building. You can give online. There's a way to give online.

It's in the brochure. Consider giving sacrificially. I want you to have an opportunity. Consider giving to the fund. In our church, I was talking to some of the guys out front.

I said, I've got horror stories about moving from place to place to meet for years from Cornerstone Church. I planted Cornerstone Church myself back in the 1800s.

So, it's been going on for a long time. And we didn't have a place to meet. And we got ran out of a place by the security guards one Sunday.

I've got stories that would wow you. I know you think you've had a hard time. We had a harder time. Okay? And after many, many years, we were meeting in a high school.

[35 : 25] and the Knox County superintendent said, if you're a church using one of our schools, you have to have a building fund.

Okay. We'll do a building fund. I mean, we had about, we had no money whatsoever. You have no idea what it means to have no money.

We had no money. We were, our church came from a college ministry. They were in need of money, not giving money. And they have a building fund. And I just snickered.

I said, sure, yeah, we'll start a building fund. And we put in the, we had a little bulletin back in the 1800s and it had a little, it said, you know, if you'd like to give the building fund.

It was unbelievable. One guy started giving a stock gift every year to the building fund. I didn't even know what a stock was. I am not kidding.

[36 : 27] Next thing I know, we're talking about buying land. The first two properties we put an offer on, they didn't even respond to us. I remember meeting with the bankers about a loan, thinking, they're not going to give us any money, guys.

I was with our accountants, you know. They're smarter than that. That's why they have money and we don't have money. They don't loan money to guys like us. Long story short, we've been in a building now for about 15 years and I'm still amazed.

The difference it will make for you in your ministry and the calling that you have to advance the gospel, it will help. I am exhibit A, Cornerstone Church of Knoxville.

Haggai's original audience had been living back in the land for more than 16 years and they had spent several years rebuilding the temple but they had just lost hope.

They had just quit. It wasn't easy, it never is. I will promise you one thing, the Lord will bless your giving.

[37 : 42] He will bless your giving and He will give you joy. He will be good to His word. And just like you're seeing in Haggai chapter 1, what you don't want to do is not give sacrificially to God's purposes, is to neglect God.

That's what you don't want to do. What you want to do is not have your paneled house but make sure He has a paneled house.

That's what you want to do and you will find blessings. And so in verse 12 where they obey the voice of the Lord, the Spirit begins to work and they respond to Haggai's preaching by the grace of God.

Grace, grace. It is the Lord at work. So they hear the word of the Lord. That's the word of the Lord. That's God at work. But their response is God at work.

He stirs, verse 14, He stirs up the spirit of Zerubbabel. He stirs up the spirit of Joshua.

[38 : 56] He stirs up all the remnant of the people. He begins to work. They begin to give. If you read Ezra and Nehemiah, which I encourage you to do, they are just filled with joy.

This is not just giving. Okay, Walt said, give, I'll give. Bill yelled at us last week, so I'll give. That's not what they're doing. God loves a cheerful giver.

You read Ezra and Nehemiah, it's their greatest joy. They're so glad to give because God is at work. This is a picture of repentance.

It's a picture of repentance. Their priorities were wrong. Now they're right because they feared the Lord. They obeyed Him. It's a happy story.

And they're joyfully serving the Lord. Ezra 6 says, the elders of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Idu, and they finished their building by decree of the God of Israel.

[40 : 08] And the top stone came forth with shouts of grace, grace, grace to it. It's a happy story. I want to conclude looking at chapter 2 because I want us to consider the second coming of Christ.

We'll often see in the Old Testament these prophetic moments that are fulfilled in Christ. And this is a great moment to put your Bibles together.

Haggai chapter 2. This is Haggai's second prophecy. In the seventh month, on the 21st day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet.

Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua, the son of Jehoshadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people and say, who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory?

How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? That's how they felt. They looked, they could not see what God was going to do.

[41 : 15] What he's going to do is Christ. What he's going to do is Advent. What he's going to do is the incarnation. They couldn't see it. Can you imagine hundreds of years before the event?

You're looking at a broken down, burnt temple, houses destroyed. Is it not as nothing in your eyes?

Now listen. Verse 4. Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the Lord. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehoshadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the Lord.

Work, for I am with you, declares the Lord of hosts. Are they allowed to say amen to that? Because you really should be really excited right now, you know?

I'm an old Pentecostal, so maybe it's just me, but that's good stuff. Be strong. According, verse 5, according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt, my spirit remains in your midst.

[42 : 24] Fear not, for thus says the Lord of hosts. Now listen. Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in.

And I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts.

And in this place, I will give peace. Reconciliation to God, declares the Lord of hosts. Now we know from the book of Hebrews that this is a reference to the second coming of Christ, because the writer of Hebrews quotes Habakkuk 2.6, chapter 12.

At that time, on Mount Sinai, his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, yet once more, I'll shake not only the earth, but also the heavens. And this phrase, yet once more, indicates the removal of things that are shaken.

That is things that have been, in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Our God is a consuming fire. Haggai is prophesying about something he could only remotely understand.

[43 : 46] He's prophesying about the coming of Christ. It's promised in the Old Testament. The writer of Hebrews picks it up. The latter glory of this house is going to be greater than the former, because as John said, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory.

Glory is the only son from the Father, full of grace and truth. And that's your mission. That's your mission. To take the good news about God becoming man.

Emmanuel. Your job is to take that. That's how you build the temple. That's your mission. And it's more glorious.

Thus says the Lord, fulfill the mission, that I may take pleasure in it, and that I may be glorified. Father, I pray for Trinity Grace Church.

I thank you for this church, Lord. I thank you for this building fund. I believe you're in it. And I thank you for all the hard work. I thank you for all the sacrifices that have already been made.

[45 : 01] Thank you for all the folks who were in those community groups from Athens. Thanks for all that they sacrificed already.

And what you've already done through their sacrifices, Lord. As we look to the future, Father, we are filled with joy. Because we hope in you and you alone.

Lord, I pray for blessings on this church. Provide for them. Provide for this building fund. For your glory alone, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen. You've been listening to a message at a Sunday celebration at Trinity Grace Church in Athens.

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