Blessings of Costly Obedience

PASTOR DAN GREEN HAGGAI



In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing:

"This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build a temple for Him at Jerusalem in Judah.

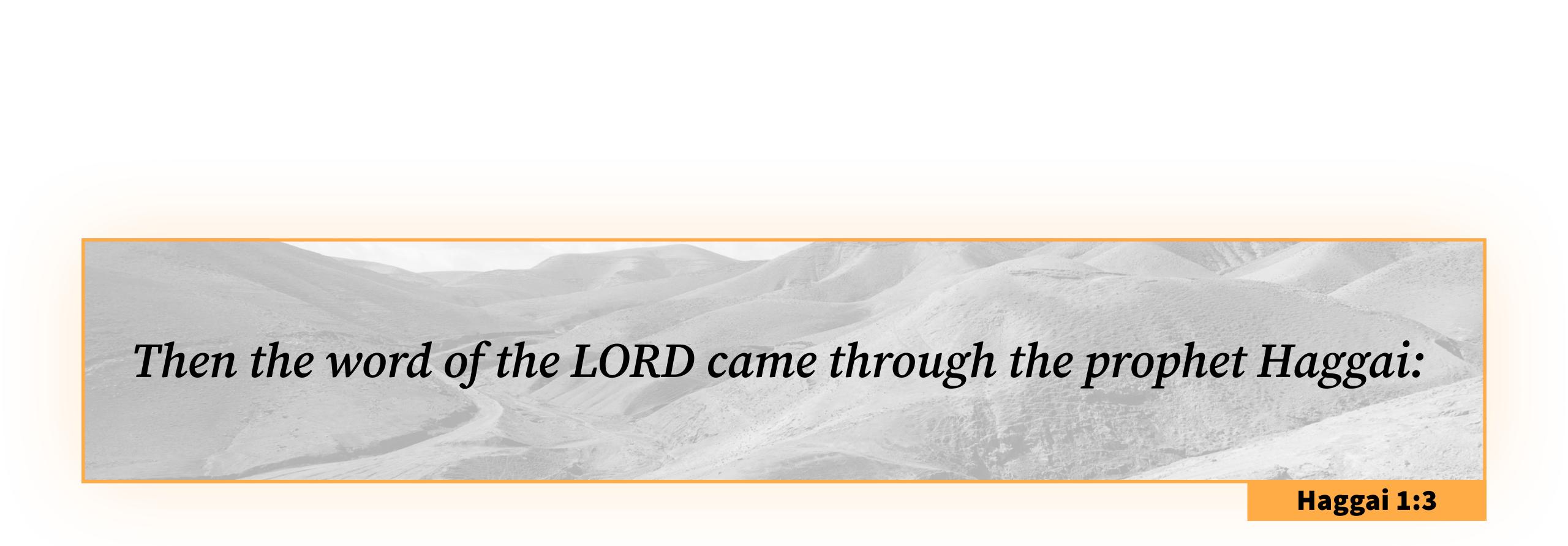
Any of His people among you may go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem, and may their God be with them.

And in any locality where survivors may now be living, the people are to provide them with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem."

Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites—everyone whose heart God had moved—prepared to go up and build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem.

In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest:

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD's house."



"Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.

You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.

Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build My house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD.

"You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of My house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house.

Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops.

I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands."



On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai:

"Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people. Ask them,

'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?

But now be strong, Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD. 'Be strong, Joshua son of Jozadak, 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.

'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And My Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.'

"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.

I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty.

'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD Almighty.

'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."

Courage must replace discouragement, because God is at work.

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Haggai:

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Ask the priests what the law says:

If someone carries consecrated meat in the fold of their garment, and that fold touches some bread or stew, some wine, olive oil or other food, does it become consecrated?" The priests answered, "No."

Then Haggai said, "If a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches one of these things, does it become defiled?" "Yes," the priests replied, "it becomes defiled."

Then Haggai said, "So it is with this people and this nation in My sight,' declares the LORD. 'Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled.

Contamination from sin ruins God's work, even if it's just my sin.

The word of the LORD came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month:

"Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.

I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother.

"On that day,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'I will take you, My servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like My signet ring, for I have chosen you,' declares the LORD Almighty."





Prioritized obedience pleases and honors our God and unleashes His blessings.