

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**HAGGAI 2****Haggai 2**

Haggai two is filled with words of instruction for the leadership of the nation of Israel and, by extension, for those of us who are followers of Jesus, the Messiah. Haggai knew the people needed to finish the work they had begun fourteen years earlier. The work of building the central worship center, the temple of God on Mt. Moriah, had stopped due to opposition from the people who were already ensconced as leadership in the land under the Babylonians and Persians. The people of the land had complained and intimidated the people of God, so they just completely stopped the work altogether. They began at that point to build their own houses and fortunes, and the foundation of the great temple of God lay in ruins.

In Chapter one, the prophet called the people to action to finish the work God had given them to do. In chapter two, you have a time signature given in verse one. The time given would have coincided with the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles on the Jewish calendar. It would have been October 17, 520 B.C. This was a day of blessing and excitement, and hope for the coming year. It was a time to seek the blessing of heaven by praying for rain, which is always a blessing in a desert land such as Israel.

Haggai asked a serious but seemingly odd question, ***"Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In***

comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing? (2:3) The reality of a comparison of the former temple of Solomon and the foundation laid for the second temple was given by Ezra as he recorded what took place at the laying of the foundation of the second temple in 535 B.C.

"But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off." (Ezra 3:12-13).

Haggai's reading of the people was that the second temple was ***"is this not in your eyes as nothing."*** (Haggai 2:3) Yet the prophet encouraged the people to "be strong" and "work" ***"for the LORD of Hosts is with you!"*** God wanted the people to know that He was well aware of what had been, what presently was happening, and what the future would be. The task at hand was to finish the work God had placed in their hand to do. They had gotten sidetracked and had been on a detour for fourteen years. It was time to get back to the work God had assigned. It still needed to be accomplished.

Prayer and Action Steps

God gives each of us an assignment from heaven, love Him supremely, love others, and make disciples. But to each of us, according to our calling, gifting, and Divine enabling, God has also given a perfect plan for our lives. Do you know God's calling for your life? Did you begin to do it and quit? Have you left work unfinished? A foundation was laid, but no superstructure. Now is the time to get off the detour and get back on the main thoroughfare that the Father has for you. Get back to the task. Finish well!