

Friday, December 20

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Haggai 1:1 - 2:23

1 **1** On August 29 of the second year of King Darius's reign, the LORD gave a message through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. **2** "This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: The people are saying, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the LORD.'" **3** Then the LORD sent this message through the prophet Haggai: **4** "Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins? **5** This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: Look at what's happening to you! **6** You have planted much but harvest little. You eat but are not satisfied. You drink but are still thirsty. You put on clothes but cannot keep warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes! **7** "This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: Look at what's happening to you! **8** Now go up into the hills, bring down timber, and rebuild my house. Then I will take pleasure in it and be honored, says the LORD. **9** You hoped for rich harvests, but they were poor. And when you brought your harvest home, I blew it away. Why? Because my house lies in ruins, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, while all of you are busy building your own fine houses. **10** It's because of you that the heavens withhold the dew and the earth produces no crops. **11** I have called for a drought on your fields and hills—a drought to wither the grain and grapes and olive trees and all your other crops, a drought to starve you and your livestock and to ruin everything you have worked so hard to get." **12** Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of God's people began to obey the message from the LORD their God. When they heard the words of the prophet Haggai, whom the LORD their God had sent, the people feared the LORD. **13** Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave the people this message from the LORD: "I am with you, says the LORD!" **14** So the LORD sparked the enthusiasm of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the enthusiasm of Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the enthusiasm of the whole remnant of God's people. They began to work on the house of their God, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, **15** on September 21 of the second year of King Darius's reign.

2 **1** Then on October 17 of that same year, the LORD sent another message through the prophet Haggai. **2** "Say this to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Jeshua

son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of God's people there in the land: **3** 'Does anyone remember this house—this Temple—in its former splendor? How, in comparison, does it look to you now? It must seem like nothing at all! **4** But now the LORD says: Be strong, Zerubbabel. Be strong, Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people still left in the land. And now get to work, for I am with you, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. **5** My Spirit remains among you, just as I promised when you came out of Egypt. So do not be afraid.' **6** "For this is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: In just a little while I will again shake the heavens and the earth, the oceans and the dry land. **7** I will shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will be brought to this Temple. I will fill this place with glory, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. **8** The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. **9** The future glory of this Temple will be greater than its past glory, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. And in this place I will bring peace. I, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!" **10** On December 18 of the second year of King Darius's reign, the LORD sent this message to the prophet Haggai: **11** "This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says. Ask the priests this question about the law: **12** 'If one of you is carrying some meat from a holy sacrifice in his robes and his robe happens to brush against some bread or stew, wine or olive oil, or any other kind of food, will it also become holy?'" The priests replied, "No." **13** Then Haggai asked, "If someone becomes ceremonially unclean by touching a dead person and then touches any of these foods, will the food be defiled?" And the priests answered, "Yes." **14** Then Haggai responded, "That is how it is with this people and this nation, says the LORD . Everything they do and everything they offer is defiled by their sin. **15** Look at what was happening to you before you began to lay the foundation of the LORD 's Temple. **16** When you hoped for a twenty-bushel crop, you harvested only ten. When you expected to draw fifty gallons from the winepress, you found only twenty. **17** I sent blight and mildew and hail to destroy everything you worked so hard to produce. Even so, you refused to return to me, says the LORD . **18** "Think about this eighteenth day of December, the day when the foundation of the LORD 's Temple was laid. Think carefully. **19** I am giving you a promise now while the seed is still in the barn. You have not yet harvested your grain, and your grapevines, fig trees, pomegranates, and olive trees have not yet produced their crops. But from this day onward I will bless you." **20** On that same day, December 18, the LORD sent this second message to Haggai: **21** "Tell Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, that I am about to shake the heavens and the earth. **22** I will overthrow royal thrones and destroy the power of foreign kingdoms. I will overturn their chariots and riders. The horses will fall, and their riders will kill each other. **23** "But when this happens, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, I will honor you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant. I will make you like a signet ring on my finger, says the LORD, for I have chosen you. I, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!"

Revelation 11:1 - 19

11 **1** Then I was given a measuring stick, and I was told, "Go and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count the number of worshipers. **2** But do not measure the outer courtyard, for it has been turned over to the nations. They will trample the holy city for 42 months. **3** And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will be clothed in burlap and will prophesy during those 1,260 days." **4** These two prophets are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of all the earth. **5** If anyone tries to harm them, fire flashes from their mouths and consumes their enemies. This is how anyone who tries to harm them must die. **6** They have power to shut the sky so that no rain will fall for as long as they prophesy. And they have the power to turn the rivers and oceans into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish. **7** When they complete their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the bottomless pit will declare war against them, and he will conquer them and kill them. **8** And their bodies will lie in the main street of Jerusalem, the city that is figuratively called "Sodom" and "Egypt," the city where their Lord was crucified. **9** And for three and a half days, all peoples, tribes, languages, and nations will stare at their bodies. No one will be allowed to bury them. **10** All the people who belong to this world will gloat over them and give presents to each other to celebrate the death of the two prophets who had tormented them. **11** But after three and a half days, God breathed life into them, and they stood up! Terror struck all who were staring at them. **12** Then a loud voice from heaven called to the two prophets, "Come up here!" And they rose to heaven in a cloud as their enemies watched. **13** At the same time there was a terrible earthquake that destroyed a tenth of the city. Seven thousand people died in that earthquake, and everyone else was terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. **14** The second terror is past, but look, the third terror is coming quickly. **15** Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices shouting in heaven: "The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever." **16** The twenty-four elders sitting on their thrones before God fell with their faces to the ground and worshiped him. **17** And they said, "We give thanks to you, Lord God, the Almighty, the one who is and who always was, for now you have assumed your great power and have begun to reign. **18** The nations were filled with wrath, but now the time of your wrath has come. It is time to judge the dead and reward your servants the prophets, as well as your holy people, and all who fear your name, from the least to the greatest. It is time to destroy all who have caused destruction on the earth." **19** Then, in heaven, the Temple of God was opened and the

Ark of his covenant could be seen inside the Temple. Lightning flashed, thunder crashed and roared, and there was an earthquake and a terrible hailstorm.

Psalm 139:1 - 24

139 **1** O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. **2** You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. **3** You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. **4** You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD. **5** You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. **6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! **7** I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! **8** If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. **9** If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, **10** even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. **11** I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night— **12** but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you. **13** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. **14** Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. **15** You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. **16** You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. **17** How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! **18** I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me! **19** O God, if only you would destroy the wicked! Get out of my life, you murderers! **20** They blaspheme you; your enemies misuse your name. **21** O LORD, shouldn't I hate those who hate you? Shouldn't I despise those who oppose you? **22** Yes, I hate them with total hatred, for your enemies are my enemies. **23** Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. **24** Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

Proverbs 30:15 - 16

30 15 The leech has two suckers that cry out, “More, more!” There are three things that are never satisfied— no, four that never say, “Enough!”: **16** the grave, the barren womb, the thirsty desert, the blazing fire.