



HEALTHY EATING FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Romans 12:2 (NLT)

² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Part 1: Bible Study

This Bible study is based on the book of Haggai in the Old Testament. It is a book given to me in my morning time with the Lord many years ago, but it's taken me a while to unwrap the package of what God is saying to us today, and to find the courage to speak what He has revealed as Truth to me. My lack of courage was holding me back...

Then, on New Year's Day of 2013, I felt strongly inclined to sit with the Lord first thing that morning. God gave me an incredibly powerful Scripture that spoke into the purpose He saw for my future, as we were nearly empty-nesters. I had been praying consistently for clear guidance on how He wanted me to use the rest of my life for His glory, with His help. Like Moses, I didn't want to do anything unless God was part of it!

I opened that morning to 1 Chronicles 28:20 (TLB):

20 "Then David continued, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Don't be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. He will see to it that all the work related to the Temple of the LORD is finished correctly."

I realized then that God was with me, just as He is with you, if we are willing to do the work He has put before us. I needed to surrender my fear of offending people with such touchy topics as food choices and exercise, so this message of encouragement and confirmation was so needed. I feel directed and excited now, and happy to share with you what I've learned over the years through over 500 hours of continuing education, and by completing the coursework to become a Certified Christian Wellness Coach (CCWC).

Best of all, God has made two things clear to me. First, my role is to share the information with anyone who is willing to listen. Next, God and you are in charge of the outcome of knowing this information, not me. I am just asked by Him to be an obedient messenger. He controls the outcome.

I guess maybe that's true about most things God has for us to do: We do the work, despite our fears and discouragement which are bound to happen; and He handles the results! That is a comforting truth to know, and I hope it helps you in your work for His Kingdom as well. He needs all of us!

WILL YOU GO DEEPER INTO HIS WORD WITH ME NOW?

Class Rules

Before we start the study of Haggai, it's important to note the 2 "rules" God gave to me that need to come through loud and clear to you:

1. **First, we must know there is no condemnation from God. For He tells us in Romans 8:1-2 (NIV): "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death."**

Journal what this statement of truth means to you personally:

As believers we are freed from condemnation because of the new life given us through the Holy Spirit. If you have not cared for your body, His Temple today, as you wish you had, tell that to God now and ask for His forgiveness. Then know for sure that THERE IS NO CONDEMNATION FROM GOD. Forgive yourself, just as God already has, and start fresh as many times as you need to.

2. **Next, we must know how much God loves us. For He tells us in Ephesians 3: 17-18 (NIV): "And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."**

Journal what this statement of truth means to you personally:

From His great love, He gave us Jesus as our Lord and Savior, who paid the price for our sins, and set us free. Only when we accept His unfailing love can we be free to surrender to His loving will for us, and His loving Spirit within us! Halleluiah!

Haggai: A Timely Message from God for Today?

Haggai 1: 1-11 (NLT) A Call to Rebuild the Temple

1 On August 29^[a] 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^[b] 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."

What did you learn from God's message that Haggai delivered here?

Where is His Temple today?

Do you think this could be a personal call to you to be ready for God to transform you now by helping you take action to learn His will for properly caring for the body He gave you?

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16 (ESV)

Haggai 1:12-15 Obedience to God's Call

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^[c] of the second year of King Darius's reign.

Journal about what this passage says to you:

What does "*feared the Lord*" mean?

Here it means a desire to give God the respect and obedience He deserves. This type of fear is also known as a *filial fear*, where we as Christians fear offending or being separated from our Heavenly Father. Know that *filial fear* is a good gift of the Holy Spirit, because through Him we know He loves us no matter what, and is worthy of our obedience and desire to please Him above our own fleshly desires.

If we are willing to devote ourselves to rebuilding the dwelling of His Holy Spirit, our bodies, He promises to be with us. Ask God to be with you personally now, and to spark your enthusiasm for the task ahead. You may wish to write out your prayer here:

Note that when the people took action (learned what God wanted them to do and began the rebuilding), God promised to be with them! We know for certain that God is with us when we begin to learn (the act of acquiring knowledge) about how He wants us to care for our bodies—His Temple today--from His Word.

“My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6

Haggai 2: 1-9 The New Temple’s Diminished Splendor

2 Then on October 17 of that same year,^[d] the LORD sent another message through the prophet Haggai. **2** “Say this to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Jeshua^[e] 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!”

Journal about what this passage says to you:

Note that God tells the people to be strong (implying this won't be easy), to take action by getting to work now, and then He reminds them that He is with them. I believe God is telling us now that we can lean on His strength and His Spirit to guide and protect us and give us the ability to follow what He is asking us to do...rebuild His Temple!

In these few verses, He calls Himself "the Lord of Heaven's Armies" 5 times! He is clearly telling us that His Armies are available to us to help us be strong and rebuild His Temple, our bodies, despite whatever temptations of the world surround us and entice us. We must call on His Spirit for help, and He will help us!

Did you sense God was speaking to you in verse 4? *"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.*

Do you have any greater power available to help you succeed when you are following God's will for your life than His Holy Spirit? No. His Spirit guarantees you success as you commit to rebuilding His Temple on earth and surrender to His Biblical instructions rather than the ways of the world.

How do you feel now? Does this change your thinking or understanding in any way? List the ways now, or comment further.

Note the words of King Hezekiah below, very similar to King David's own words of encouragement to King Solomon to build the original Temple:

"Be strong and courageous! Don't be afraid...for there is a power far greater on our side! (2 Chronicles 32:7)

Haggai 2: 10-23 Blessings Promised for Obedience

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^[9] 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."

Promises for Zerubbabel

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!"

Journal about what this passage says to you:

What an exciting close to this short, but powerful message from God! God promises us His blessings for obedience to His command to get back to work on rebuilding His temple. We are guaranteed a 'reward' for doing the work. He even offers us blessings for starting the work, for "the seed is still in the barn." This doesn't happen this specifically very often in the Bible, and God promises us the help of His Holy Spirit so we can overcome the temptations and desires of our flesh. And He guarantees our success if we will get to work!

Let me confess right now that temptation for me used to be a fast food hamburger and a diet soda for lunch, and frozen yogurt or soft-serve ice cream for my sweet tooth! After being diagnosed with 13 cancerous tumors in my left breast over 14 years ago, I changed my ways with God's help. You can too!

What does this promise of blessing and the help of the Holy Spirit mean to you personally?

As we end this Bible study, let's focus again on David's promise from God to Solomon for building the original Temple:

20 Then David continued, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Don't be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. He will see to it that all the work related to the Temple of the LORD is finished correctly. 21 The various divisions of priests and Levites will serve in the Temple of God. Others with skills of every kind will volunteer, and the officials and the entire nation are at your command."

Journal about what this passage says to you:

My prayer for you: Oh Lord, please bless all who read these words with the precious gift of your Holy Spirit indwelling in them clarifying Your message to us today. Your Holy Spirit is a gift made possible through our faith in the death and resurrection of Your Son Jesus, freely given for our salvation. We thank You for the life You have given us and the body you have created for us in Your own image. May we now commit to learning Your ways of properly feeding and caring for our bodies as Your Temple today. We surrender to Your Truths and offer You all praise and glory! You alone are the Lord of Heavens Armies! Amen.

Feel free to add your own prayers:

In closing, I would like to share my dream with you. My dream is that Christians would become so healthy and fit and vibrant by adopting the lifestyle He created us to live, we would stand out in this fallen world today. We would have the strength and energy to do what He created us to do, and others would flock to know the Creator who makes this possible! Praise Your Holy Name! Amen!

To help you live out this healthy lifestyle, I have also written a short booklet called **Healthy Eating for All God's Children**. It provides information from God's Word, along with the new research behind why God's way is still best. You may download and print it for free on this site. Please feel free to share this information with others by sharing this website with them.

Always remember GOD LOVES YOU!

And we are all God's children!