

They Obeyed and the Lord Stirred Their Spirit

Ezr 1:1-3 ESV In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, **the LORD stirred up the spirit** of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 2 "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 **Whoever is among you of all his people**, may his God be with him, and **let him go** up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, **and rebuild** the house of the LORD, the God of Israel--he is the God who is in Jerusalem.

- The LORD stirred the spirit of Cyrus - so that the LORD's word through Jeremiah might be fulfilled
- There is an invitation to go and be involved in this work of God (to rebuild the house of the LORD)

Ezr 1:5 Then rose up the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, **everyone whose spirit God had stirred** to go up to rebuild the house of the LORD that is in Jerusalem.

- **God stirred the spirit of the people to go and rebuild**
- **He stirred the people to awake to the LORD's work and be involved in it**

During the time of Haggai - the excitement of rebuilding had come to a stop

- A remnant of people has gone back to Jerusalem after 70 years of captivity.
- The Samaritans who had inhabited the land during the seventy years that they were in captivity, came and offered to help them...but they didn't want the help.
- So they sent letters to the king of Persia,history is that of rebellion...If they build a city, they will rebel against you.....you better stop them
- So the king of Persia ordered them to stop building
- They said, "We have permission from Cyrus.....check the records."
- So the orders came to start building again.
- But by this time **the people had lost interest in rebuilding the temple and were building their own homes instead.**
- So Haggai comes along and he is encouraging the people to get back to work in the rebuilding of the temple. His prophecies have to do with the encouragement of rebuilding the temple.

The issue - God had stirred them once to His purpose, and they had drifted from it

Hag 1:1-15 ESV 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 Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest: 2 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: **These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the LORD.**" 3 Then the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, 4 "Is it a time for you yourselves **to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?**

- Our **purpose must be aligned** with God's
- **The LORD says** it is time to rebuild - we read that in Ezra 1
- **These people say** it is not time to rebuild
- They began well, (stirred by the spirit of God) but had drifted from God's purpose

Consider your ways - living at odds to his purpose, how can he bless their labor

5 Now, therefore, **thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways.** 6 You have sown much, and harvested little. 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.

He presents an alternative to them - this was the original plan and calling

7 **"Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways.** 8 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.

God explains He is the one that is opposing them because "My house lies in ruins"

9 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.** 10 Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. 11 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."

They chose God's alternative (Hag 1:8 Go up to the hills and bring wood and BUILD the house)

12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, 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.***

- They responded with obedience
- They feared the LORD

They LORD promised He would be with them

13 Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke to the people with the LORD's message, ***"I am with you, declares the LORD."***

The LORD stirred their spirits again - they came to work on the house of the LORD

14 And ***the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel*** the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and ***the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak***, 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, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

The presence of God and the stirring of God came at the point of obedience

- Hag 1:12 - they ***OBeyed*** the voice of the Lord
- Hag 1:13 - His ***PRESENCE*** was with them
- Hag 1:14 - ***the LORD stirred their spirit***

God chose those whose hearts were stirred up...to build the Tabernacle of Moses

Exo 35:21 ESV And they came, ***everyone whose heart stirred him***, and ***everyone whose spirit moved him***, and brought the LORD's contribution to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the holy garments.

Exo 35:26 ESV ***All the women whose hearts stirred them*** to use their skill spun the goats' hair.

Exo 36:2 ESV And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the LORD had put skill, ***everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work.***

The stirring of our spirits

Sometimes we are stirred because of a need or the condition of a people

- Act 17:16 KJV Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, ***his spirit was stirred in him***, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

Sometimes we must take responsibility and stir up ourselves

- 2Ti 1:6-7 KJV Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou ***stir up the gift of God***, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. 7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Sometimes our enthusiasm will stir others

- 2Co 9:2 NIV For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and ***your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.***

Summary

- Has God ever stirred your heart?
- Have you become discouraged? (changes at ACC with start of CCC)
- God will stir your heart again, but like the people in Haggai - **obedience will precedes it**