

Hag 1:3-4

Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?"

Did you know that in the bible, whenever God asked for money that people responded by giving and never complaining about it? I know that it may sound like a no duh, but if the bible shows people doing this, then why don't we do the same thing?

I mean, now-a-days we have to have fundraisers, building funds, pledges, etc...

"Well, I have a lot of bills, and my car needs fixed, and my house needs new curtains and floors, and I need..."

Stop; this is what God says about our excuses.

† **Hag 1:5-6 (NLT)** *This is what the LORD Almighty says: Consider how things are going for you! You have planted much but harvested little. You have food to eat, but not enough to fill you up. You have wine to drink, but not enough to satisfy your thirst. You have clothing to wear, but not enough to keep you warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!*

Don't we say that we put God first in all things? But if you were truthful, isn't it that we put God first in some things, as long as they don't interfere with our comfort zone? But I speak to myself as well, because I know to well that in the past that my *wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!* Because I used to think of me first when it came to money, then the Lord last if I had any left over.

If we would only read scripture and see all the blessings to those who have gone outside of their comfort zone and were obedient to God.

How about in the book of Haggai, which is where our devotional verse comes from?

† **Haggai 1:7-13 (NLT)** *"This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: Look at what's happening to you! 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. 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. It's because of you that the heavens withhold the dew and the earth produces no crops. 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." 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. Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave the people this message from the LORD: "I am with you, says the LORD!"

In this part of scripture, God's people were so busy making sure they had everything and that their own houses were looking good that they neglected God's house. But once God spoke and *the people began to obey the message from the LORD their God* then *the Lord's messenger, gave the people this message from the LORD: "I am with you, says the LORD!"*

Do you really think that God would be pleased if you witnessed to a multi-millionaire and he/she got saved and came to your church so that the church would not be in want because of their money? Or would God be more pleased if everyone in the church just gave what He asked them to?

† *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.*

† *Exodus 23:19a The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.*