

Haggai 1:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

Analysis

And I called for a drought upon the land (וַיְאָקַרְא חֹבֶב עַל-הָאָרֶץ/va'ekra chorev al-ha'aretz)—God explicitly claims responsibility: **I called** (קָרָא/kara) for this drought (חֹבֶב/chorev, dryness, desolation). This wasn't impersonal fate or bad luck but personal, purposeful divine action. The comprehensive scope follows: **upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands**—eight areas of impact covering agriculture, livestock, human effort, and natural resources.

This list echoes covenant curses (Deuteronomy 28:15-24, 38-42) that God promised would come if Israel forsook Him. **Corn** (דָּגָן/dagan, grain), **new wine** (תִּירוֹשׁ/tirosh), and **oil** (יִצְחָר/yitzhar) represent staple crops essential for survival. **Men** and **cattle** (בָּקָר/bakar) together encompass human and animal life. **All the labour of the hands** (כָּל-יְגִיעָה כְּפִים/kol-yegia khpayim) indicates that human effort itself was rendered futile—not for lack of trying but because God withheld blessing.

Why would God do this? Not cruelty but covenant love. Discipline proves relationship (Hebrews 12:5-11). God could have abandoned them to their self-focused lives, allowing them to drift into permanent spiritual apathy. Instead, He

used hardship to wake them up, expose their idolatry (self-worship masked as pragmatism), and call them back to Himself. Hosea 2:6-7 describes similar discipline: God blocks Israel's path with thorns so she'll return to her first husband.

Historical Context

The comprehensive nature of this drought indicates sustained agricultural failure affecting every sector of the economy. This wasn't one bad harvest but a pattern of futility over the sixteen years they neglected the temple. The people likely rationalized it as normal post-exilic hardship, but Haggai reveals divine intention: God was speaking through circumstances, calling them to repentance and renewed obedience.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do you discern when difficulties are general trials of life versus specific divine discipline meant to expose sin or redirect priorities?
2. What does God's willingness to discipline those He loves reveal about the nature of saving relationship versus mere religious affiliation?
3. In what areas might God be allowing frustration or futility to prevent you from settling into comfortable self-focused living?

Interlinear Text

בְּכָרִים
and upon the mountains
H2022

וְעַל כָּבֵד תְּאַלֵּג אֶל
upon the land
H5921 H776

וְעַל בָּאָרֶץ
for a drought
H2721 H5921

וְעַל
H7121

בְּאַבְרָהָם
and upon the oil
H3323 H5921

וְעַל בְּתִיר וְשָׁבֵן
and upon the new wine
H8492 H5921

וְעַל בְּצִדְקָה
and upon the corn
H1715 H5921

וְעַל בָּאָדָם ה
and upon that which the ground
H127 H5921

וְעַל תֹּצְאֵא אֲשֶׁר וְעַל
bringeth forth and upon
H3318 H834 H5921

וְעַל כָּל וְעַל בָּאָדָם
and upon all the labour
H3018 H3605 H5921

וְעַל בָּבָהָם ה
and upon cattle
H929 H5921

וְעַל
and upon men
H120 H5921

כַּפְרִים
of the hands
H3709

Additional Cross-References

Haggai 2:17 (Parallel theme): I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the LORD.

Deuteronomy 28:22 (Parallel theme): The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

1 Kings 17:1 (Parallel theme): And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

2 Kings 8:1 (Parallel theme): Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn

wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

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