

Haggai 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.

Analysis

The Hebrew phrase 'eth ha-am ha-zeh' ('this people,' not 'My people') signals divine displeasure with Israel's spiritual apathy. Their claim 'the time has not come' (lo eth bo) reveals rationalization—prioritizing personal comfort over God's house. This mirrors the human tendency to delay obedience when immediate sacrifice is required. Theologically, this demonstrates how unbelief manifests not through direct denial but through procrastination and misplaced priorities. The Israelites returned from exile 16 years earlier but ceased temple rebuilding due to opposition and self-interest, showing how easily spiritual fervor wanes when challenged.

Historical Context

Written circa 520 BC during Darius I's reign, Haggai addressed Jews who returned from Babylonian exile under Zerubbabel and Joshua. Temple rebuilding began in 536 BC but halted due to Samaritan opposition (Ezra 4:24). For 16 years the foundation lay unfinished while people built their own homes. Economic hardship (drought, crop failure) and fear of Persian authority contributed to their hesitancy. Haggai's prophecy, delivered in four messages over four months, galvanized the community to resume work, which they completed in 516 BC.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What areas of obedience am I postponing with rationalizations like 'the time is not right'?
2. How do I prioritize my comfort over God's purposes, and what would genuine reprioritization require?

Interlinear Text

כ ה	אָמַר וְ	יְהִי הַ	צְבָא וְתִ	אָמַר וְ	בְּשָׁם
H3541	Thus speaketh	that the LORD'S	of hosts	Thus speaketh	This people
	H559	H3068	H6635	H559	H5971
הַזֹּה	אָמַר וְ	לְעֵת	בְּאַתְּ	עֵת	בְּיַתְּ
H2088	Thus speaketh	H3808	The time	is not come	The time
	H559		H6256	H935	H6256
					H1004

לְהַבְנֹת: יְהוָה הַ
that the LORD'S should be built

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 4:10 (Parallel theme): And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.