

Haggai 1:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

Analysis

Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house (עַלֹּו הַהֲרֵר וְהַבָּאָתֶם / alu hahar vahavetem etz uvnu habayit)—After diagnosis comes prescription: specific, actionable obedience. **Go up** (עַלֹּו / alu) requires physical effort—climbing the nearby mountains to harvest timber. **Bring wood** (בָּאָתֶם עֵץ / havetem etz) demands labor, transportation, and community cooperation. **Build the house** (בְּנֹו הַבָּיִת / vnu habayit) is the imperative result: construct God's dwelling place.

And I will take pleasure in it (בָּצָה / ve'ertzeh-bo)—the verb (ratzah) means to delight in, accept favorably, find satisfaction. God doesn't merely tolerate obedience; He takes pleasure in His people's worship and their prioritization of His glory. This echoes the sacrificial system where offerings were "a pleasing aroma to the LORD"—not because God needs buildings or sacrifices but because they represent hearts turned toward Him.

And I will be glorified (בָּכַד / ve'ekavdah)—the Niphal stem of (kaved, "to be heavy, weighty, honored") indicates God receiving the glory He deserves. When His people rebuild His house, they publicly declare His worth, centrality, and lordship. Conversely, neglecting God's house dishonors Him—their actions proclaimed that He wasn't worth their time, resources, or effort.

Historical Context

The mountains surrounding Jerusalem—particularly forests on slopes near the city—provided timber. Unlike Solomon's era when David amassed vast cedar supplies from Lebanon, these returning exiles had to harvest local materials themselves. The task required physical labor, but it was achievable. God doesn't command impossible obedience; He commands faithful action within their capacity, empowered by His presence (v.13).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What specific, concrete actions is God calling you to that would demonstrate His priority in your life, even if costly or difficult?
2. How does knowing that obedience "pleases" God and brings Him glory motivate action beyond mere duty or obligation?
3. In what ways might you be waiting for ideal circumstances to obey when God is calling you to faithful action with what you have now?

Interlinear Text

עַל וְרַכְבָּה מִבְּנָה תְּבִנֵּה
Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house
H5927 H2022 H935 H6086 H1129 H1004

וְאָרֶץ הַיְהוָה אָמַר רַבִּיבָה
and I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified saith the LORD
H7521 H0 H3513 H559 H3068

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 7:16 (Parallel theme): For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

Ezra 3:7 (Parallel theme): They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

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