

Haggai 2:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Since those days were, when one came to an heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty.

Analysis

Since those days were, when one came to an heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty (מִהְיוֹתָם בָּא אֶל-עֲרֵמַת עֲשָׂרִים וְהִיְתָה) **mihyotam ba el-'aremat esrim vehayetah asarah ba el-hayekev lachsof chamishim purah vehayetah esrim**)—God provides specific examples of the futility He described in 1:6. **An heap of twenty measures** (עֲרֵמַת עֲשָׂרִים/'aremat esrim)—a pile of grain expected to yield twenty units—**there were but ten**—50% loss. **The pressfat** (הַיֶּקֶב/hayekev), the vat for pressing grapes or olives, expected to produce fifty vessels of wine or oil—**there were but twenty**—60% loss.

These concrete details demonstrate that God's discipline wasn't vague or imaginary but measurably affected their agriculture and economy. The inexplicable shortfall—harvest coming in far below expectations—was divine intervention, not mere bad luck. This fulfills covenant curse warnings: "You shall carry much seed into the field and shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it" (Deuteronomy 28:38).

The specificity also serves pastoral purposes: God knows their situation intimately. He isn't distant or unconcerned but attentive to grain piles and wine vats—the details of daily life. His discipline was targeted and purposeful, designed to prompt

the self-examination He commanded (1:5, 7). Similarly, His coming blessing (v.19) will be tangible and measurable, not abstract spirituality divorced from real life.

Historical Context

Agriculture in ancient Israel depended on rainfall, adequate labor, and God's blessing. Normal yields could be predicted based on planting and weather. When actual harvest fell dramatically short of expectation despite adequate effort, it indicated supernatural intervention—either blessing or curse. The people had experienced this chronic shortfall for years without understanding its theological cause until Haggai explained it.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How might God be using measurable, tangible frustrations in your life to expose misplaced priorities or spiritual disobedience?
2. What does God's attention to the details of grain piles and wine vats reveal about His involvement in every area of your life, not just "spiritual" matters?
3. How do you discern when difficulties are normal life challenges versus divine discipline meant to prompt examination and repentance?

Interlinear Text

מֵהַיּוֹתָם	בָּא	אֶל	עַרְמָת	עֲשָׂרִים:
H1961	Since those days were when one came	H413	to an heap	of twenty
	H935		H6194	H6242
וְהִיָּתָה	עֲשָׂרָה	בָּא	אֶל	
H1961	measures there were but ten	Since those days were when one came	H413	
	H6235	H935		
הִיָּתָה	לְחַשֵּׁף	חֲמִשָּׁים	פּוֹךְ	וְהִיָּתָה
to the pressfat	for to draw out	fifty	vessels out of the press	H1961
H3342	H2834	H2572	H6333	
עֲשָׂרִים:				
of twenty				
H6242				

Additional Cross-References

Haggai 1:6 (Parallel theme): Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.