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Topic: Haggai 1:12: "Then all the remnant of the people obeyed the voice of LORD their God!"

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Praise the Lord.

It occurred to me how wonderful it would be if we could already be singing these songs so carefree as in the hereafter. Here on earth, despite all the joy and all the experiences that are dear and precious to us, there is still hardship. And I really had to think what will it be like when we are there in glory in our transformed resurrection bodies, singing the great Hallelujah carefree. Yes, that will be magnificent. There will be no more long faces, no more sorrow, no more suffering, no more hardship, no more death. Is it not wonderful that we are allowed to carry this hope within us? A blessed hope, a justified hope that does not lead to disappointment but to reality. Wonderful. May everyone experience it and may it come to pass that in the end truly all who belong to the bride of Christ may say: "***Yes, come quickly, Lord Jesus.***" [Rev 22:20]

Perhaps things must get even worse for us. You know, we can brace ourselves for quite a few things that may still befall us, even in purely earthly terms. The entire upheaval, the mass migrations taking place in this way, none of it will end well. The food supply, all of this will bring many consequences. But the more that happens, the sooner we realize that the times are indeed serious. And we, who are permitted to believe according to Scripture, lift up our heads all the more because we know that our redemption is drawing near. [Luk 21:28]

Famines must come. [Mat 24:7] Times of scarcity must come. People complain that everything is so expensive; we can still afford it after all. It only becomes expensive when we can no longer afford it. And it will become even more expensive when one will no longer be able to buy or sell, as it is written in Revelation. [Rev 13:17] So to start complaining now is actually too early; we'll still have time for that when the time comes. Now we really ought to thank the Lord God that we are still doing reasonably well and have food and drink. And Scripture does say that we should then be content with these things. [1Ti 6:8]

How grateful we are to the Lord for the freedom we still have.

And today, of course, there is an election in our country. But the course has long

since been set. And we have seen in the recent past that all those who do not go along with it and do not wish to follow the path that must be taken are forced to step aside. And people who now fit into the program are allowed to participate, they must participate. We are thinking in particular of the Iron Lady, who simply understood as a Methodist—she is after all a Methodist—and she realized that England's sovereign rights were being taken out of its hands by the treaties of Rome. And she could not go along with it out of conviction; she knew where it was all heading, but now the hour has come. And as we read in the Old and New Testaments, "***God sets up kings and God deposes them***", depending on what is required at that particular time in God's plan. [Dan 2:21]

Our brother has already read from the prophet Haggai. Haggai was one of the men who had the Word of the Lord during the rebuilding of the temple. And the good thing among God's people was that they had recognized that he was not merely speaking, but that God was speaking through him. That it is God's Word that is being proclaimed and that he himself brought the divine message and not his own. When God's people recognize this through revelation, we can be helped by God. But if we merely think that this is the message of Moses or the message of Haggai or other men, then it will not work. But when we realize that this is God's message, and God's work, and God's kingdom, and God's church, when it is revealed to us through the Spirit that it is God's Word, then everything changes immediately. Then comes respect, then comes awe, then comes trust, then comes faith, then comes obedience. And then we too find our place in the presence of God.

I shall read this verse once more, for it is very precious. Here in Haggai, that was Zerubbabel… Haggai 1, verses 12 and 13 I would like to read.

[12] ***Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, namely the words of Haggai the prophet, whom they recognized had been sent to them by the Lord their God.***

Not only the common people, but also Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and the high priest Joshua the son of Josedech. These were men who also had a specific ministry to carry out. Yet they submitted and respected the divine order, accepting and embracing the prophetic commission and message. And so they recognized that this man with a "Thus saith the Lord" stood on divine ground and had been sent by the Lord himself.

What a wonderful word. Where do we stand in this picture we are currently contemplating? It says here: "***with all the remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God.***" [Hag 1:12]

But the Lord God was not on earth; on earth was the prophet Haggai. God was in heaven. But God is in heaven and on earth. God fills the universe, God dwells in our hearts through faith. God speaks, God works. God saves, God heals here on earth. If he were not present, none of this could happen at all. It can only happen because

he is present. Not one of us could have experienced salvation and forgiveness and healing and deliverance and indeed the blessings at all, were it not for God being present to confirm his Word and to give us what he has promised therein.

[12] *…**with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, namely the words of Haggai the prophet, whom they recognized had been sent to them by the Lord their God. And the people did fear before the Lord.***" [Hag 1:12]

They did not fear Haggai, but the fear of God came upon them. And the fear of God is still today the beginning of divine wisdom. [Psa 111:10, Pro 9:10]

And the beginning of divine wisdom also signifies the end of our own wisdom. Only when we have reached the end of our own wisdom can God's wisdom be revealed and bestowed upon us.

After verse 12 comes verse 13, which we have already read.

[13] ***Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the Lord.***

In Singapore I attended a Bible college called Haggai College. And I was invited to share my testimony there on a single occasion. And as I spoke with the individuals there and also with the teaching staff, I realized one thing: that the name, which is now capitalized, has absolutely nothing in common with the actual matter so clearly presented in the prophet Haggai. There are no prophets there, no prophetic revelation of the Word. It is taught just as it has always been taught in various seminars. Not the name… There are even churches called the Philadelphia church, and that's supposed to be brotherly love. And if you look inside, there's not a trace of brotherly love. Then we have our Elim churches. I'm not criticizing, I submit to them myself. Elim, how many palm trees were there, who knows? And how many springs, who knows? Pardon? What does Elim mean? No, then I won't tell you either, if you read the Bible to me like that. What? Pardon? How many springs? How many trees? "Seventy?" [Exo 15:27] You are already very close to the answer, God bless you.

Yes sir, but this is about something quite different. Not the name we give ourselves, for it is written: "***Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.***" [Rev 3:1]

One may have the name; one may be a Pentecostal church, a Baptist church. But are we truly that, or is it merely the name? We wish, without passing judgment, and if we do, then let us start with ourselves. We wish to face God and ask whether in our own time we have truly recognized what this is all about. Jesus said, looking upon Jerusalem and weeping: "***Oh, that in this your hour you had recognized what leads to your peace.***" [Luk 19:42] Not in other times, but: ***"at this hour of yours you might have recognized what leads to your peace.***"

Every person living on earth is allotted their time by God, the hour they must seize in order to share in what God is doing on earth. We are living now, and we must have part in what God is doing in this time.

In chapter 2, verse 5, which is also very familiar to us, it says:

[5] ***According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.*** [Hag 2:5]

Our brother has already spoken of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, where the Word becomes prophetic revelation, not merely inspired when it was written, but inspired anew as revelation when it is proclaimed and believed. This occurs solely through the Holy Spirit who searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. [1Co 2:10]

For there is no human being who has access to these spiritual things, even if he were the holiest person on earth. For as Paul writes to the Corinthians: "***…the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.***" [1Co 2:10]

Not the prophet, not the prophet Haggai or others. The Spirit of God searches out these things through revelation and then uses a mouth to speak the words of God, which are indeed revelation. Here we have heard it, "***the promise I gave you when you came out of Egypt.***" [Hag 2:5]

We simply must understand: the promises given to the New Testament church at its beginning remain valid until the end. Hebrews 13, verse 8: "***Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.***" [Heb 13:8]

We simply need to pull ourselves together and realize that these promises were given so that we might hear them through the preaching, believe them and then receive them. Not merely as a lesson for illustration, so that we might be informed or instructed, so to speak, but so that through faith in what God has promised us we might come into possession of these things.

This is actually illustrated in the Old Testament by the fact that God had promised the land with its seven nations to the people of Israel. And it was even called the promised land. When the time of fulfillment came, it was not merely words that had been proclaimed, but what had been promised to them for so long became divine reality before them and with them.

And once we have grasped that we have arrived at a similar situation… There is a parallel; just as it was in the beginning, so it is now with the people of Israel and with the church. In that first Christian generation, Judaism coexisted alongside the newly emerging Christianity until 70 AD, when the Roman General Titus finally took Jerusalem after a two-year siege—and you have surely read how much blood was shed there.

But the point is important: from the beginning of the New Testament church, two things ran parallel to one another, namely in that first generation, until one came to an end and the other continued. Now the order is exactly the reverse. In this

last generation associated with the church, Israel has been called back from over 100 countries around the world to the promised land. Now we have two things running parallel to one another again, and we see this very clearly when Paul writes to the Romans in chapter 11 from verse 25: "***…when the full number of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved.***" [Rom 11:25-26]

And Israel has returned home, because the Messiah will also come there after the rapture—we know that. But they have returned home because God has said so in his Word. We are therefore most certainly living in the final generation of the plan of salvation as determined by God within this civilization. And when we are certain of this—not in ourselves, but on the basis of the authority of God's Word… As our Lord himself said: "***…when you see this, when you see that, then take heed.***" [Luk 21:28]

And when you see that the "***fig tree is becoming tender…***" [Mat 24:32]

And we then know on the basis of the Old Testament word that this fig tree is Israel which, after more than 2,000 years—for since Nebuchadnezzar the people had been scattered—and then finally in 70 AD. But in any case, after so many years, they have returned and become a state of its own. There are indications in Holy Scripture that leave no room for conjecture but clearly and unambiguously state the things that are now being fulfilled before our very eyes.

And then in context of the Old Testament we are told here in Haggai 2, verse 6:

[6] ***For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;***

If this Word were not also found in the New Testament, then we could simply dismiss it. Then we could say: "Farewell, dear God of the Old Testament, we turn to the New Testament." But thank God that he has forged such a close connection between the Old and New Testament, for which we are grateful, that we are able to see and recognize it. The relevant passage is of course found in Hebrews, familiar to us all and read out here several times already that God will fulfill the promise he has given. Hebrews chapter 12, verse 26:

[26] ***Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying,*** [Haggai 2, verse 6] ***Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.***

And then you may well read on, that already points to the transformation, that is to the immediate end before the establishment of the millennial kingdom. And just as the people returned back then, rebuilt the temple, everything to measure as God had said and ordained, so now the New Testament church finds itself in its final stage and must return to where the church was at the beginning.

Perhaps I must read this passage to you; surely we can bear these two verses, so that you may know, I'm now speaking of Hebrews 12, so that you may know in what context the passage from Haggai is reproduced here.

We have read chapter 12, verse 26. Let us continue reading from verse 27.

[27] ***And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.***

You can read for yourselves in the Bible what will happen during the apocalyptic judgments. The houses and everything will indeed collapse, the earth will be shaken as never before, and God will call everything to account: the host of heaven in the heavens and the people on the earth on the earth.

You have read this, but so that you may know that it is written literally in the Bible, I'm reading this one verse to you from the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 24, perhaps verse 1 and then the relevant verse.

[1] ***Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.***

And then there's a great deal more; now verse 19.

[19] ***The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.***

[20] ***The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; it shall fall, and not rise again.***

We have read that everything that has been created will be shaken, only that which was not created for the temporal realm will remain.

Then we read on in verse 21.

[21] ***And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.***

[22] ***And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.***

Now think of Revelation 20.

Immediately before the establishment of the millennial kingdom, an angel comes down from heaven with a chain, seizes Satan, binds him for a thousand years, and he is cast into the abyss. [Rev 20:1-3]

At that time, a cleanup will take place without mercy involving the heavenly host and all the adversities we face today. For Paul writes: "***we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places.***" [Eph 6:12]

And then, when that day comes, the first reckoning will indeed take place when the bride is caught up. Then the battle ensues: "***Michael and his angels fight; and the dragon and his angels fight.***" [Rev 12:7]

And then there's only one casting down. The Lord and the bride go up; Satan and his host are cast down. And before the millennial kingdom begins, first the host of the high ones will be called to account and then the kings of the earth on this earth. And then the decisive word is spoken: "***…and are gathered in the pit, and shut up in the prison, and after many days…***"—and I can tell you exactly how long that is: it is precisely after the thousand years that they will be judged, for then comes the last judgment.

Such things are actually very clear; you don't need any mathematical talent when it is written that God will have Satan bound for a thousand years. I shall read it to you so that you know it is written literally as such: Revelation 20, verse 1.

[1] ***And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.***

[2] ***And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,***

[3] ***And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.***

It is simply awe-inspiring to grasp these connections between the Old and New Testament as a comprehensive overview, as an insight into the secret counsel of our God.

We are a blessed people, chosen to hear the words of the Lord, including the prophetic words in these days, to stand on God's side and simply to believe from the heart what God has promised.

It cannot be overemphasized: whoever is in harmony with God now must be in harmony with his Word. There's no agreement with God apart from the Word of God. Only those who agree with the Word of God can truly agree with God.

"***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God***" [Joh 1:1], and that is why it is so important that the Word is proclaimed and placed upon the lampstand.

Oh yes, that is where this is heading now. Some are uniting on a global scale, and as I have said and I shall also write it, the world's number one power is emerging here. And if anyone thinks that the 340 million, who by the end of 1992 will belong to a united Europe, is not the largest figure—after all China has a larger population—it really doesn't matter how large China is or how many people live in India, that really doesn't matter at all.

This is simply about Bible prophecy, about what has been promised for the end times and what is now unfolding politically, religiously, and economically.

That it was precisely our country that dealt this death blow to the Roman Empire through the Reformation. It was a wound by the sword, as the Holy Scriptures say, "***one of his heads as it were wounded to death***" and then "***his deadly wound was healed.***" [Rev 13:3] And behold, "***all the world wondered***" that where the deadly wound was, healing came and everything returned to peace and joy.

I tell you the truth: this country, which was used by God to help the Reformation achieve a breakthrough, but which was later divided, first religiously, Catholics, Protestants, and then politically into East and West, now we are witnessing that these two divisions have come to an end.

And who has noticed this in our country? Whenever anything special happens, there is no longer a Catholic service here and a Protestant one there; it is always an ecumenical service. Then the two sides are united under one roof, and that is precisely what they wanted to achieve.

And let no one be angry with me, especially not devout Catholics, but if it would help the cause, then I can tell you right now what the Pope could do: he could beatify and canonize Luther if by doing so he could succeed in getting all the Lutherans over to his side and bringing them back into the mother's womb.

Don't worry, there is no man on earth as cunning as he, and he knows every trick there is on earth.

I don't know what I've just said, perhaps not entirely consciously, but perhaps I did. Wait and see what happens.

Since the Second Vatican Council, Protestants are no longer cursed but merely regarded as separated brethren, welcomed as separated brethren. The free churches are no longer sects; they are now legal entities under public law, all have a say at a negotiating table.

And what is it? They say, "We are all brothers after all, let us be together," and so on.

Before, they did have one common cause, namely the enemy: communism and atheism. Now that matter is out of the way, what now? Now a common house with the atheists and the communists, in which there is room for everyone.

Do you get that? The overall strategy—that's just how it has to be in these last days.

And the prophet Daniel made it quite clear when he saw the statue: gold, silver, bronze, and then the ten toes, what was there? Iron mixed with clay, but you cannot mix iron with clay; you can stick them together, but you cannot mix or blend them. [Dan 2:41-43]

And there you can read in the prophet Daniel how these things were foretold, that the things would unite and that the kingdom would be partly strong and partly brittle. [Dan 2:42]

That is what these two things, iron, clay, mean, as we are told in the prophet Daniel.

Now we've got it. There everything is fragile, everything is falling apart, nothing works anymore. And here everything is strong. There is this beautiful union, a great house. And who is the boss of this great house? There's no doubt about that either: the Antichrist will rule the whole thing.

And Christ will call out his church, prepare it, seal it, and before the great catastrophe comes upon humanity, he will return to take us into his glory.

Oh yes, it is a serious time, a turbulent time in which we live, but also a beautiful time.

We see the division is over, our country will be the driving force, we will pay for everything. And what will happen then, when our people can no longer keep up because it becomes too much and our coffers run dry and there's a shortage everywhere?

It is not yet the end of the world; much more is yet to come upon humanity. And as long as we are here, we may feel the effects here and there. But one thing is certain: we are living close to the return of our Lord.

And we are not afraid; on the contrary, we say only, "Lord, bring all these things to an end as quickly as possible and take us away from this valley of tears into your glory."

For some who are not yet familiar with these concepts, particularly from the book of Revelation and the prophet Daniel, do not worry; very soon everything will become very clear.

The Holy Spirit guides into all truth. [Joh 16:13] He shows us how things stand; indeed, the description is so clear and so distinct that even a fool cannot go astray. [Isa 35:8]

May we who have been honored in these days to hear the prophetic Word, may we receive all these words into our hearts in the fear of God, that they may be transfigured by the Holy Spirit so that we may be imbued with divine nature and life and become part of God's plan of salvation in our days, not merely as informed observers but as people who are directly connected to what God is doing in his kingdom on earth and who have part in it.

May God by his grace make such people of us all. Amen.

Faithful Lord, we thank you most sincerely for this time of grace and for this message of grace which has come to us, O Lord, that you have not forgotten us but have had mercy on us, accepted us, O Lord.

Lord, we can never praise your name enough for this nor offer you honor and thanks you deserve, O Lord.

But Lord, accept our worship, accept our praise and thanks, Hallelujah, from the depths of our hearts, O God.

Prepare us, O Lord, for your coming, that we may be watchful, that we may be praying, O Lord, when you come, Lord, that we may lift up our heads and know that our redemption draws near. [Luk 21:28]

Be with us all; Lord, I pray, bless all who have come, our brothers and sisters from near and far, Lord, be with them all and bless them all.

Even now, Lord, as we conclude these gatherings, Lord, be with them on their way home, Lord, bless them in the place where you placed them and make each one a blessing, Lord, a witness.

Lord, grant this by your grace; we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.