

Haggai Part 2 - "Consider your Ways" (1-14-24)

Timeline Review - Return from Babylon & Rebuild the Temple

- Cyrus commissioned the work, funded it, and returned what Nebuchadnezzar had stolen from the temple
- The people return to Jerusalem led by Zerubbabel rebuild the altar & keep the feasts (Ezra 3)
- The people laid the foundation for the temple, weeping & celebrating as they dedicated it (Ezra 3)
- Adversity strikes, opposition by locals, and eventually it ceased when a new ruler replaced Cyrus (Ezra 4)
- Now 16 years later - Haggai prophesies with a call for the rebuilding to begin anew:
 - You dwell in paneled houses while the Lord's house lies in ruins . . . Consider your ways
 - The people hear the message and respond in obedience - God affirms His presence with them

Just one problem, no man gave permission to restart this project, which the previous king had shut down . . .

Today Part 2: Complete the Work (Haggai 2, Ezra 5 & 6)

1) God Encourages them - with His Presence & His Promise

Haggai 2:1-3 (ESV)

(1) In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet: (2) "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say, (3) 'Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?'

Note: Haggai 1 - during the 6th month of Darius' 2nd year. This message comes 1 month into the work.

- How do you see things? Is it nothing in your eyes?
- In other words is this worth it? Is there any hope?
- Remember - Lots of work, no funding, much opposition from the local people, and the potential wrath of the king as they are ignoring the edict to stop the work!

Haggai 2:4-5 (ESV)

(4) Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts, (5) according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not.

Note: God confirms His Presence - and that is enough!

Haggai 2:6-8 (ESV)

(6) For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. (7) And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. (8) The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts.

Note: God promises glory & provision - It's gonna be worth it, & he'll provide what is needed (more on this)

Haggai 2:9 (ESV)

The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts."

Note: What makes the temple glorious? The presence of God! (My Spirit remains in your midst - vs 5)

What made this temple more glorious? This is the temple Jesus knew and visited!

2) God Blesses them - He cleanses, protects, and provides

2 months later (3 total months into the project) . . .

Haggai 2:10-14 (ESV)

(10) On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, (11) “Thus says the LORD of hosts: Ask the priests about the law: (12) ‘If someone carries holy meat in the fold of his garment and touches with his fold bread or stew or wine or oil or any kind of food, does it become holy?’” The priests answered and said, “No.” (13) Then Haggai said, “If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?” The priests answered and said, “It does become unclean.” (14) Then Haggai answered and said, “So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, declares the LORD, and so with every work of their hands. And what they offer there is unclean.

Note: When they bring something holy and mix it or try to apply it to something common, it doesn't make it holy. And when they touch something unclean, it makes them unclean. They cannot make themselves clean, and no amount of work on their part can accomplish that.

- **The point:** We are completely reliant on God's gracious hand to bless - only He can cleanse us!
- **Consider:** Jesus visits this temple during his ministry (first & last visit): **He cleanses it!** (John 2 & Matt 21)
- **2 things are noted:** Zeal for God's house consumes him / It is to be a House of Prayer

***Will we allow Him (the one who is zealous for us) to come in and cleanse & renew with His Presence?**

Note 3 things that come from saying yes to the Lord and entrusting this renovation project to Him . . .

a) God cleanses and renews . . .

Haggai 2:15-19 (ESV)

(15) Now then, consider from this day onward. Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the LORD, (16) how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. (17) I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to me, declares the LORD. (18) Consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider: (19) Is the seed yet in the barn? Indeed, the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have yielded nothing. But from this day on I will bless you.”

Note: The people can't make themselves clean, but they can rely on the Lord and rededicate themselves to him and the work he calls them to. And He brings the blessing!

While this work is happening . . .

Ezra 5:1-5 (ESV)

(1) Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. (2) Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were with them, supporting them. (3) At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus: “Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?” (4) They also asked them this: “What are the names of the men who are building this building?” (5) But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report should reach Darius and then an answer be returned by letter concerning it.

Note: The work is progressing, but here comes trouble...

The Letter from Tattenai (Ezra 5:6-17) - We asked the Jews who gave them permission to start this work . . .

Ezra 5:11-13 (ESV)

(11) And this was their reply to us: ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. (12) But because our fathers had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia. (13) However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt.

Ezra 5:17 (ESV)

Therefore, if it seems good to the king, let search be made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by Cyrus the king for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. And let the king send us his pleasure in this matter.”

Darius commissions a search of the records, discovers Cyrus’ original declaration, and sends word . . .

b) God protects . . .**Ezra 6:7 (ESV)**

Let the work on this house of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

c) God provides . . .**Ezra 6:8 (ESV)**

Moreover, I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God. The cost is to be paid to these men in full and without delay from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province from Beyond the River.

Note: Remember the Lord’s words through Haggai amid the work (Haggai 2:15-19) . . .

“From this day on I will bless you!”

3) God Seals them (His children marked for inheritance)**Haggai 2:20-23 (ESV)**

(20) The word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, (21) “Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, (22) and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms. I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders. And the horses and their riders shall go down, every one by the sword of his brother. (23) On that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, the son of Shealtiel, declares the LORD, and make you **like a signet ring**, for I have chosen you, declares the LORD of hosts.”

Note: Zerubbabel - in the line of Christ (Matt 1 & Luke 3) / This is not just a broad message to the people, this message from God through Haggai finishes with a personal word of encouragement.

Conclusion: It’s possible to know the Truth & God’s Promise, but not receive it personally from the Lord. He sees you and knows you, you are His child, and He is with you!

Ephesians 1:13-14 (ESV)

(13) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, (14) who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Note: We are sealed with His presence now & marked for eternal glory!