

Haggai Part 1 - "Consider your Ways" (1-7-24)

Haggai 1:1-2 (ESV)

(1) In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest: (2) "Thus says the LORD of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the LORD."

Note: This is about 16 years after the first wave of Jews returned from exile. Their commission was from Cyrus the king of Persia who received a message from God to rebuild his temple in Jerusalem. He sends . . . **Zerubbabel** (also has a Chaldean name: Sheshbazzar) - Prince or Governor (He is in the royal line of David).

1) History of the Rebuild & Resettlement Project

- Cyrus commissioned the work, funded it, and returned what Nebuchadnezzar had stolen from the temple

Ezra 1:1-4 (ESV)

(1) In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: (2) "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. (3) Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. (4) And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem."

- Ezra 3 - the people rally as one and rebuild the altar, keeping the feasts (the 1st one? Feast of Booths)
- Ezra 3 - the people laid the foundation for the temple, weeping & celebrating as they dedicated it.

Ezra 3:11-13 (ESV)

(11) And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. (12) But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, (13) so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.

- Ezra 4 - Adversity strikes, opposition and eventually the work ceased when a new ruler replaced Cyrus

Ezra 4:4-5 (ESV)

(4) Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build (5) and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Opposition became so strong that the new king after Cyrus shuts the whole project down . . .

Ezra 4:24 (ESV)

Then the work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem stopped, and it ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Now 16 years later - Haggai prophesies with a call for the rebuilding to begin anew . . .

2) A call to consider & return

Haggai 1:3-4 (ESV)

(3) Then the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, (4) “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?”

Note: Paneled Houses - a place that's decked out! You are living large, and God's place is in shambles.

Haggai 1:5-6 (ESV)

(5) Now, therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways. (6) You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

Note: This isn't a “prosperity gospel” message it's a “priority gospel” message. Jesus called us to this . . .

Matthew 6:31-33 (ESV)

(31) Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ (32) For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. (33) But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

(1:5) Haggai's call to “Consider your ways” means: “Set your heart” on your ways (road, journey, direction). This is a call to do some real soul-searching regarding the manner or habit of your way of life.

Haggai 1:7-8 (ESV)

(7) “Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways. (8) Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the LORD.

Note: The Lord takes pleasure in dwelling with us, He is glorified when we prioritize and worship Him!

Haggai 1:9-11 (ESV)

(9) You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the LORD of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house. (10) Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. (11) And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast, and on all their labors.”

Note: Why are things not good? “Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.” (1:9)

Application: This reminder from Haggai is about understanding the temple and the way of life that goes with orienting ourselves around the Lord, getting aligned with His presence, His calendar, and His priorities.

This is about completing the work that was started, and living a life of worship!

Philippians 1:3-6 (ESV)

(3) I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, (4) always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, (5) because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. (6) And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Partnership (Fellowship - Koinonia): association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse

3) The people respond

Haggai 1:12 (ESV)

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.

Note: The people obey and submit to God - His call, His rule.

Haggai 1:13 (ESV)

(13) Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke to the people with the LORD's message, "I am with you, declares the LORD."

Note: Do you want the Lord to be with you? Then you be with Him by aligning properly with Him!

vs. 12 - The people walked in Obedience and the Fear of the Lord

This is a life of worship - We will be "present" with and therefore "ruled by" what we worship!

Worshipping & experiencing the Presence of God is the greatest gift!

Haggai 1:14-15 (ESV)

(14) And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, (15) on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

Conclusion: Consider your Ways - Set your heart to it . . .

- What's my overall aim in life, what are my key priorities? Who is really in charge?
- What are my daily habits? Consider what the use of my Time & Treasure says about my priorities.
- How's my spiritual health? Have I allowed the Lord to "finish the work" by surrendering my areas of struggle and weakness?