

Haggai 1-2 Hindrances (The Minor Prophets)

In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, ²“Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying: ‘This people says, “The time has not come, the time that the LORD’s house should be built.” ’ ”

³Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, ⁴“*Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?*” ⁵Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: “Consider your ways!

V.1 Signals a change in the writing of the Minor Prophets – He mentions a Gentile King – Darius

A)Two reasons this is important to note:

B#1 It tells us the exact time frame that this is written –

1)Darius started reigning in 521 BC – in the 2nd year = 520 BC

C)Haggai is very specific to name the exact time periods of his messages –

the historical accuracy of the Bible is clearly seen in this Prophecy.

D)#2 The 2nd reason why this is important is it tells us that this is Post Exile

1)There is no KING reigning in Israel because the nation is under the power of the Medes and the Persians

Noted on Sunday The First 9 minor prophets are Pre – exilic – meaning they are prophesying prior to the Babylon and Assyrian invasions – resulted in Exile

A)First 9 write Pre–Exile to warn of the coming Judgment

B)They address – a Jewish King & his people - Calling the people of God to repent and return to God to be spared of the coming Judgment.

The Final three prophets starting with Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi Post-exilic/ post exile.

A)I mention that because it is important to understand who they are writing to

B)Their prophecies are directed toward the remnant who stayed in the land and the remnant who returned to rebuild the temple.

C)The message of Haggai was written to those people but has incredible application to us

16 years prior to this – the Persian emperor Cyrus gave a decree allowing the Jews to go back and rebuild the temple.

A)But only 50K returned – a small portion of the over a million Jews in exile

B)They came back under the leadership of a man named Zerubbabel –

C)They started off with a fervor – and were able to clear the debris that was in the courtyard –

D)and reestablish the altar of sacrifice and reinstate the daily sacrifices in the temple

That was in the fall of 536 BC

By the spring time things began to change –

A)Though the temple foundations were laid - enough hardship came their way to slow them down.

B)Enemies up in the area of Samaria were opposing the work

C)And King Cyrus who had given the decree had died and his successor – Ahasuerus – Esther ch.4

1)The people around Jerusalem implored him to put a stop to the building of the temple.

And enough of those road blocks caused the Jewish people to turn from the building of the temple – to their own pursuits – own houses

A)They forgot about the work of God –

B)And the people grew accustomed to worshipping God amongst the rubble

C)But The temple was rebuilt because of 4 godly men

➤ Zerrubbabel – read about him in the opening verses – the governor –

D)Zerubbabel was the grandson of King Jehoiachin and therefore of the royal line of David.

1)He is heir to the throne – but there is no King so he is given the role of Governor

E)**So God uses Zerubbabel** – and He uses Joshua the High Priest

➤ Two Prophets – Haggai and Zechariah

F)Short book – only 2 chapters – the focus is meant to inspire them to get back to work

Haggai lays out 4 impediments or hindrances to following through on the work of God in our lives!

A)We talked about the first one on Sunday – Selfishness that is characterized by wrong priorities

B)The people of Judah had abandoned the work of God and were focused on their own thing

Note: V.3 phrase paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins

A)That is a reference to the expensive cedar that was used in building Kings houses

B)So it wasn't just that they were focused on building their own houses they were doing expensive remodels while the house of God lied in Ruins

C)How is that working out for you! V.6

Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways!

- You have sown much, and bring in little;
- You eat, but do not have enough;
- You drink, but you are not filled with drink;
- You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm;
- And he who earns wages,
- Earns wages to put into a bag with holes."

D)Their focus was on trying to get ahead – but it left them further behind.

E)Consider your ways – Priorities out of Whack

What was the answer to the Problem: Govt Protest ? Prayer service? – Fundraiser trying to rally support.

A)Get busy v.7 ⁷ Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways! ⁸ Go up to the mountains

and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified."

B)God takes pleasure in and is gloried when we are doing what He has called us to do!

C)When we take the step in the direction of his will – He empowers us to do what He has called us to do!

D)God's commandments are always God's enablements!

We see a great picture of that beginning in V. 12

"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 presence of the LORD. ¹³ Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, spoke the LORD's message to the people, saying, "I am with you, says the LORD." ¹⁴ **So 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 sixth month, in the second year of King Darius."

Note that Phrase in V.14 The Lord stirred up the Spirit of Zerubbabel

A)God stirred them up – literally we could say that God energized them to do the work.

B)This is important don't miss this or you will be in for a lot of frustration in your service to the Lord

1)Their obedience was met with God's Power

C)God's commandments are God's enablements – Never asks us to do something He doesn't supply power to carry out.

1)When we step out in obedience He meets us with His strength to follow through.

Paul wrote in Philippians 2:12,13 "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

God's work in our lives does not happen by Osmosis – We have a part to play

A) You work hard and apply yourself to growing spiritually – and following the Lord and serving the Lord.

B) But understand that the work that you do – can be and really must be energized by the Lord.

C) That is how you finish it and don't get burned out in the work of the Lord

Think of it this way:

A) There have been a few times in my travels that I have had a tight connection in flights –

B) One landing – short time to get to the next gate.

1) One time where I found out the next gate is clear on the other side of the airport –

C) I am thinking – **I am never going to make it**

1) But as I exit the plane – I see something that gives me hope – **LONG MOVING SIDEWALKS**

D) Now I have a choice – I could have bypassed the moving sidewalk and walked really fast on my own – trying with all my might – **missed my flight**

E) But I chose the moving sidewalk – Now I walked fast – I worked hard – good pace and with the help of the moving sidewalk – **I made my connecting flight**

I found **that the device of the moving sidewalk allowed me to do more than what I could do in my own strength!**

A) I was working but I was really **cooperating** with a power that was greater than myself to get there – and I made the flight

B) **Work out your own salvation – Sanctification** but it is God who is working in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure.

C) When we step out in faith and obedience God energizes and supplies us with a power greater than ourselves that enables us to do the work

So the first Hindrance to finishing the work – was Selfishness that was evidenced by their wrong priorities

A) The 2nd Hindrance we see in the beginning of Ch. 2 was **Nostalgia**

In the seventh *month*, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the

prophet, saying: ²“Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying:

³ ‘Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, *is this* not in your eyes as nothing?’

⁶ “For thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; ⁷ and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,’ says the LORD of hosts. ⁸ ‘The silver *is* Mine, and the gold *is* Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts. ⁹ ‘The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘And in this place I will give peace,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

Ezra Ch.3 Gives us insight into this scene;

A) When the foundation of the temple was laid – **the young men rejoiced – this is awesome we are on our way!**

B) **But the old men wept** – problem was – this temple was a lot smaller than the temple that was build by Solomon.

1) They had been there to see Solomon's – in its grandeur before it was destroyed by the Babylonians

C) They are standing there looking at the footprint and thinking – **THIS IS NOTHING**

1) This is so small –

D) The young men are fired up at what God is doing

1) and the old men **are pouring water on their fire!**

E) Doesn't compare to what God did in our day.

Listen Older Generation: We can be guilty of that

A) Talk about the good old days – always compare – focus on what God was doing then – Not doing now!

B) Listen Older – Saw the Revival of the Jesus people movement – Special –

1) be careful that you don't – quench what God is doing now – this generation

C)The young people who know nothing about that time – all they can do is focus on now –

1)God moving and working now! – Exciting for them.

2)Don't downplay or pour water on their fire –

D)CONVICTING – I have done that – When I was a youth Pastor – or back in the day-

1)When that is my focus – I miss out in what God is doing RIGHT NOW.

2)INSTEAD of rejoicing – I am prone to complain – SO WRONG!!!

E)John the Baptist – Some of us are so focused on what God is not doing – comparing what he did in the past –

1)MISSING WHAT HE IS DOING RIGHT NOW!

Listen you want to be miserable? Try running in a race while going forward but looking backward!

A)Not going to work – not going to get very far

B)Paul said – Forgetting what lies behind and looking forward to what lies ahead – Run the race

1)Often we equate that to our defeats – don't focus on and be condemned – crippled – definitely an application to that text

C)But an equal application is don't focus on your victories either – **don't look back at the past – Don't live off of yesterdays victories –**

1)Keep moving forward trusting God to continue to work

D)In the race of God we are always to be looking forward- God has much more ahead and it might look different.

God says to Zerubbabel and Joshua – You be strong – repeats it 3 times – For Zerubbabel and Joshua and the People –

A)The glory of this temple is going to be greater than the glory of the latter temple

B)Physically not even a comparison – but this is the temple that Herod would remodel and Jesus would stand it – teach in the courtyard

C)This is the temple that on the day of the Crucifixion – the Veil would be torn in two

1)**That moment God ushered in the New Covenant – Work was DONE – the WAY was opened through Christ**

D)The Glory of this temple would far exceed the glory of Solomon's

Hindrance #3 Defilement –

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, saying, ¹¹ “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Now, ask the priests *concerning the law*, saying, ¹² “If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?’ ” ’ ”

Then the priests answered and said, “No.”

¹³ And Haggai said, “If *one who is unclean because of a dead body* touches any of these, will it be unclean?”

So the priests answered and said, “It shall be unclean.”

¹⁴ Then Haggai answered and said, “ ‘So is this people, and so is this nation before Me,’ says the LORD, ‘and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.

¹⁵ ‘And now, carefully consider from this day forward: from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the LORD—¹⁶ since those *days*, when *one* came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were *but* ten; when *one* came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were *but* twenty.

¹⁷ I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands; yet you did not *turn to Me*,’ says the LORD. ¹⁸ ‘Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid—consider it: ¹⁹ Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded *fruit*. *But* from this day I will bless you.’ ”

Chapter 1 Consider your Priorities

Chapter 2 Consider your Purity

A)Priority and Purity go hand and hand

B)Both are needed to be real effective

1)One without the other doesn't really help

C)Take the Pharisees for example

1) They had all kinds of priority – serving the Lord seemed to be their only priority

D) But they did it with impure motives

1) And it just stained what they were doing

Haggai is almost making that same exact point

A) He asks them two questions

#1 – If you touch normal food with holy meat – that is meat that was offered to the Lord, does the regular food then become holy – Answer no –

#2 – Well how about if something is unclean and then rubbing up on that same food, is it then unclean and the answer would be yes

B) To put it in terms we might understand better

- If I am a healthy person, and I walked into a room with people who have the flu and all kinds of chronic sickness

C) They don't become healthy just because I am there

However if someone with some nasty virus walks into a room of healthy people that person can infect the whole room

A) And the point of both what Haggai is saying about the meat and my illustration of healthy and sick people is sin spreads easily

B) and it will infect everything it touches

1) A little unconfessed, un-repentant of sin in your life will affect every area of your life

C) Its like when the Bible says a little leaven leavens the whole lump – that is so true

Example: In a lot of food establishments today – they have the soda fountain station

A) Often times the water tap is connected to the Lemonade or the fruit punch fountain.

B) Sometimes there is a residual drop or two in the dispenser of punch when you click the tap for your water –

1) Result your water comes out a tad pink – taste a little sweet

C) In the same way – a little sin that isn't dealt with infects all of your life and usefulness for the Father

D) The People of Judah were trying to serve the Lord, but allowing small compromises –

Defilement

And just as God said, I want you to consider your priorities –

A) it is your lack of them that is causing this suffering

B) Now a few months later God is telling them – now you need to consider your purity –

1) For a lack in the area of personal purity will cause a lack in the area of effectiveness in your life

C) So he tells them to consider your purity and get your heart right with me

And then just as the Lord did with the area of Priority, God basically says test me on it

A) see if this day, He names the day, if you turn to me, I will pour my Spirit upon you and all you do

B) Try me, test it out, see if it isn't from the very day

C) V.15 From that day forward

V.19 . *But from this day I will bless you.* ”

D) Lesson: God meets obedience with Power and Blessing!

Hindrance #4 is Unbelief – this one seems to be for Zerubbabel personally.

²⁰ And again the word of the LORD came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, ²¹ “Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying:

Zerubbabel was the grandson of King Jehoiachin and therefore of the royal line of David.

A) But instead of wearing a crown and sitting on a throne,

B) Zerubbabel was the humble governor of a struggling remnant of the Jewish nation,

1) trying to complete the building of a rather inglorious temple.

C) What a discouraging situation for a royal prince to be in!

It seems Zerubbabel needed some personal encouragement to finish the work

A) Perhaps he was doubting whether they would have the strength to finish the work

B) Or maybe he was focused on the enemy – thinking would they be able to sustain the work even if it was completed.

C) Enemy is good at getting us to focus on the problems and our insufficiencies

“Don’t focus on the bigness of the task – focus on the greatness of your God.”

D) We don’t know the reason why Zerubbabel was discouraged and lacking faith – but God has a special message for him.

God told Haggai to give Zerubbabel this message
“Tell Zerubbabel

‘I will shake heaven and earth.

**²² I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms;
I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms.**

**I will overthrow the chariots
And those who ride in them;
The horses and their riders shall come down,
Every one by the sword of his brother.**

²³ ‘In that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,’ says the LORD, ‘and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you,’ says the LORD of hosts.

The signet ring was a stone carved with the symbol of the person in power.

A) It was used by pressing it into clay tablets to authenticate what was written on them.

B) That is, it was much like a signature today. The signet was a precious object.

1) So it was kept on the ruler’s finger or on a cord around his neck. It was guarded with his person.

C) God was telling Zerubbabel that he was going to be like that to God.

1) The Power of God was going to be evident in his life

D) I have chosen you says **the Lord of Host – “the LORD of Host or the Lord Almighty.”**

A) **“The Lord of heavens armies -** This designation of God occurs fourteen times in the book.

B) It is appropriate, because it focuses on the

strength or sovereignty of God.

C) Zechariah 4:6 – God use another Prophet to tell Zerubbabel

Not by might My spirit says the Lord!

God places on Zerubbabel a signet ring and God places on us – the Seal of his Holy Spirit

A) You are mine – Power of the Holy Spirit – be strong in the Lord and the power of His might

B) More than conquerors

Practical Lessons

1. The work of God is begun, sustained, and encouraged by the Word of God.

God used Haggai to bring the word and God worked through it to inspire the people

A) When God’s servants proclaim God’s Word in the power of the Spirit, things begin to happen.

2. God’s servants must work together to build God’s temple.

Haggai and Zechariah, an older man and a younger man, both ministered the Word to the Jewish remnant, and God blessed their mutual efforts

Generational Church

3. When the outlook is bleak, try the up-look.

A) Apart from God’s promises, we have no hope.

B) Vance Havner used to say, **“Faith sees the invisible, chooses the imperishable, and does the impossible.”**

C) Keep eyes on the Lord and not the obstacles or the enemy!

4. Putting God first is the guarantee of God’s best blessing.

Seek First the Kingdom of God and His righteousness all these things shall be added unto you.

5. Apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, our labors are in vain.