

recenter

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI



BIBLE STUDY LESSONS
FOR C.O.R.E. GROUP
DISCIPLESHIP



Rebuke

(The complacency of His people)

- Share your top three life priorities. How do these priorities affect the way you make decisions?
- What is something that you still need to finish and how do you plan to complete it?

READ

WITH

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." 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 panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins? 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. 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. 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."

HAGGAI 1:1-11

Complacency is sin. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines complacency as "self-satisfaction, especially accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies." On a small scale, complacency can look like carelessness or neglect in our daily tasks and responsibilities. On a spiritual scale, complacency means drifting away from God. When we become desensitized with our relationship with God, it can lead us to a destructive path before we even realize it.

Israel was exiled for 70 years before God, through King Cyrus of Persia, brought them back to the Promised Land. However, the land and God's temple were in ruins. Although the foundation of the temple had been laid during Ezra's time, the Israelites stopped rebuilding it for several reasons: discouragement, lack of financial support, and oppositions. Consequently, the people of Israel shifted their focus to building their own homes and securing their livelihood. The temple symbolized the presence of God, and Israel longed for a place of worship during their exile. However, once back in the land, they neglected God and His temple, grew spiritually complacent, and pursued things in vain. Eighteen years later, in His mercy, God sent Haggai to deliver a message of restoration—not just of the temple, but of their hearts toward Him.

Notes

What lessons can we learn from God's message through Haggai?

1. Let's refocus our perspective on God.

² "Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord." 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 panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins? 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.

Haggai 1:2-6

The Israelites stopped rebuilding the temple because they insisted it was not yet the right time. Also, during the rebuilding of the foundation of the temple in Ezra's time, their adversaries discouraged them and even bribed counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose. (See also Ezra 4:4-5)

Identify the voices you often listen to. How do they affect your perspectives about your life and purpose?

2. Let's reorder our priorities around God.

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. 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.

Haggai 1:7-9

As the prophet Jeremiah had prophesied, God fulfilled His promise to bring back the Israelites to the Promised Land. However, they got sidetracked in their relationship with God and decided to run after their own pleasures instead.

Think about the things you have on your plate. Can you say that you are doing them for God's glory or your own satisfaction? Why or why not?

3. Let's be reassured of God's presence.

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

Haggai 1:12-13

God's open rebuke through Haggai made the Israelites, including their high priest and leaders, obey Him. Although they had grown discouraged, disappointed, detoured from God's purpose and found it hard to start again, God assured them of His abiding presence as they obeyed.

Do you sometimes find it hard to continue doing what God has called you to do? Why or why not?

LET'S PRAY

- Call on God to realign your life, plans and ways with His good, pleasing and perfect will.
- Ask God to lead you to someone with whom you can share His message of restoration this week.

LET'S APPLY

- Remember God's good purpose for you as His child.
How can you live it out starting today?
- Encourage someone who's struggling in their walk with God this week.

Response

(The challenge to rebuild for the Lord)

- Think of a person you usually go to for help. Who is it and why?
- Share a time when you accomplished something out of your own efforts. How did you feel about it?

LESS READ

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

HAGGAI 1:12-15

Notes

LEARN

TEST

Describe what happened the last time you obeyed God in response to His Word.

How should we respond to God when He speaks?

1. Decide to obey His Word.

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.

Haggai 1:12

Throughout the Old Testament, the prophets were God's spokespersons delivering divine messages, warnings, and guidance to Israel that mostly fell on deaf ears. In contrast, God's people obeyed and feared Him through the message of the prophet Haggai.

2. Dwell in God's presence.

Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message, "I am with you, declares the Lord."

Haggai 1:13

God assures Israel of His presence as they rebuild the temple while establishing their relationship with Him again.

How do we acknowledge God's presence in our lives? What should we do to be filled by Him daily?

3. Do it with fellow believers.

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.

Haggai 1:14-15

Obedience in this context began with the leaders (i.e. the governor and the high priest) then the people followed. They started rebuilding the temple together as God had commanded them.

Do you have someone leading you to follow Jesus? Why is it important for both leaders and followers to obey Him together?

LET'S PRAY

- Ask God to help you hear His voice and give you the grace to obey Him.
- This week, pray for someone you can help who needs to follow Jesus again.

LET'S APPLY

- Re-commit to have a regular devotional time with God.
- Encourage someone this week to follow Jesus just as you are following Him.

Revelation

(God reveals Himself to His people)

- What is your greatest fear and why?
- Recall a time when you were in a great need and there was nobody to help. How did you face it?

READ THIS

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?* 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.

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.

⁹ 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.””

HAGGAI 2:1-9

Notes

LEARN LIFE

How does
the truth
that God is
with us help
you face the
troubles of
life?

What does God show us when we choose to obey Him?

1. His amazing protection.

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.

Haggai 2:4-5

The prophet Haggai's second message urged the returned exiles of Judah to remain strong to rebuild God's temple. He assured them that God would be with them and protect them as they worked on rebuilding His temple.

2. His abundant provision.

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.

Haggai 2:6-8

The Israelites were discouraged because of their perceived lack of resources for doing God's work. However, God reminded them that He owns everything. Therefore, He will provide for all that was needed for the rebuilding of the temple. The only thing lacking was their obedience.

Since you know
that God will
provide everything
you need to fulfill
His purpose in
your life, how does
this affect the way
you view your
needs?

3. His abiding peace.

'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.'

Haggai 2:9

God had plans for the future of Judah. In the end, the people would experience God's abiding peace amidst the nations' shakings as they continued to do the work of rebuilding God's temple.

How have you
experienced
God's peace as
described by
Paul in
Philippians 4:7?
How did it
deepen your
relationship with
God?

LET'S PRAY

- Ask God to help you know Him more especially when you experience life's troubles.
- Pray with someone who you know is going through a tough time.

LET'S APPLY

- Ask God to show you how to trust Him fully in a difficult situation you may be facing.
- This week, share your testimony with someone about your recent experience of God's peace.

Reward

(God rewards His people abundantly)

- What is your most memorable achievement growing up?
- Recall a time when someone rewarded you for doing something good. How did you react?

LET'S READ

²⁰ The word of the Lord came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month: ²¹ “Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. ²² I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother. ²³ “On that day,’ declares the Lord Almighty, ‘I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”

HAGGAI 2:20-23

Notes

LEARN IT'S LEARN

Think about your relationships, finances, health, spiritual walk, and work. Does the way you live please and glorify God? If yes, how? If not, what changes should you make to reflect His glory?

What are the benefits of obeying God?

1. God's pleasure and honor.

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.

Haggai 1:8

For years, God's people stopped rebuilding His temple and rather got busy with constructing their houses. Consequently, God sent the prophet Haggai to instruct them to prioritize its rebuilding to bring Him pleasure and honor.

2. God's promise to act in victory.

²¹ "... I am going... ²² I will overturn... I will overthrow... ²³ 'I will take you...' 'and I will make...'” declares the Lord Almighty.

Haggai 2:21-23

Haggai encouraged the people that the Lord would powerfully act on their behalf and give them victory as they obeyed Him.

What part of your life lately has God given victory in when you obeyed Him? How has it helped your faith grow stronger?

3. God's provision of blessings.

Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. 'From this day on I will bless you.'"

Haggai 2:19

Haggai spoke about how obedience to God leads to blessing. The people obeyed the message and resumed the work on the temple. As a result, God had promised to bless them abundantly.

How has the Lord blessed you since you put your faith in and followed Him?

LET'S PRAY

- Ask God's grace to enable you to faithfully obey Him.
- Pray for God to lead you to a fellow believer who may need some encouragement to obey Him.

LET'S APPLY

- *What area/s in your life do you find difficult to obey God? Talk to a trusted leader who can help you about it this week.*
- *Testify to someone about how God had blessed you because of your obedience to Him.*

