

HAGGAI

PRIORITIES IN STRANGE TIMES

DISCUSSION GUIDE



WEEK 2: WHAT'S MY ROLE IN GOD'S STORY?

Read the Text

Haggai 2:1-9

¹In 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? ⁴Yet 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, ⁵according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not. ⁶For 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. ⁷And 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. ⁸The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts. ⁹The 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.’”

Main Point

What was true of the Israelites 2500 years ago is true for us today: we are inundated with distractions that lure us away from God's plan for us. What does it mean to maintain a Kingdom perspective and stay on mission? Haggai 2 sheds some light on the answer.

This passage starts with the Israelites participating in feasts and celebrations that existed to remember what God had done to save His people. The ironic thing though is that due to their disobedience, the Israelites were lacking in crops and flourishing fields. What was meant to be celebratory was actually a sad reminder of their lack of faithfulness. The Israelites were in a season of discouragement where they were being disciplined and they couldn't bring themselves to do the hard labor of building God's temple. We can relate to this as well. Sometimes when life isn't going our way, or if we feel as though God is withholding, we can become lazy or complacent in our faith. But when we turn our gaze to God and His plans for us, He can become bigger than our circumstances. ***When obedience to God is our benchmark, then we can become content in Christ and release our circumstances to Him.***

In their discouragement, God gives His people a very important reminder: He is with them and they therefore do not need to fear. Yes, they feel weary and tired and discouraged. But God exhorts them to be strong. This is not strength that the Israelites can possibly find in themselves but rather in God. The same is true for us! ***We are empowered by God for His work.***

Finally, we see Haggai point the people towards the future. God promises to fill His house with His glory. He promises to release His treasures. These promises bring us to a place of worship. It puts things in perspective where it guides us to release the things of the world in place of true worship. ***The cure for our discouragement and striving is Jesus.*** We get a taste of this when we use the gifts He has given us – whether physical or spiritual – to worship and bring glory to Him.

Reflect Together

1. God offers some amazing promises in this passage: He is with them, He honors His covenant, He sends His Spirit, He will bring treasure to His people, He will fill the house with glory, He will give peace. What does it mean to you that God offers these promises? Why do you think He makes promises to His people?
2. Have you ever faced a situation where you had to prioritize God's kingdom over personal ambitions or comforts? How did you handle it? What was challenging about it?
3. How is God empowering you for His work? Consider where you work, serve, and live. What unique gifts has He given you to accomplish His purpose?