

9. Haggai – What are you busy with?

Opening Thoughts:

Our lives are filled with thoughts of “busy-ness”. We’ve got stuff to do at home. We’ve got stuff to do at work. We’ve got things on our mind. In the days of Haggai, the people were busy with various “stuff.” But the stuff didn’t have much to do with the Lord. While they were obsessing about their 401K and planning their retirement package, the Lord’s plans were not on their mind. – What are the “stuff” that occupy most of our time and thoughts? What are you looking forward to in our life? What are you worried about? Are there short/long term goals you have for your house? For your retirement? How do the Lord and His house factor into your thoughts and planning?

Haggai

Ezra 1-6 Provides the historical backdrop. After returning from exile, the leaders Zerubbabel (governor/king), and Joshua (high priest) are in charge of restoring the temple in Jerusalem. (see attachment at end “background info”)

Main Theme: “Consider your ways...” (Lit - “Set Your Heart” - 1:5; 1:7; 1:15; 1:18)

#1 - Consider your investments of time and money (1:1-15)

1:1-6 - Consider your ways: What are the people focused on and what are they complaining about? Have you ever seen similar problems in your own life?

1:7-11 - Consider your ways: What is keeping the people busy and occupies their heart? What is being neglected? Have you seen similar issues in our own church?

1:12-15 - What is the people’s response to this and what can we learn from it?

#2 - Consider the greater glory that is coming (2:1-9)

2:3-5 The Lord issues three basic commands/encouragements: Be _____ / _____ / _____ not. Why do you think the people needed these encouragements? What was getting them discouraged?

2:7-9 What promise does the Lord give to build their hope?

#3 - Consider your uncleanness (2:10-19)

2:11-13 Haggai tells a parable with two scenarios.

(A) Pictures how _____ food does not make the thing it touches _____ .

(B) Pictures how _____ food does make the thing it touches _____.

2:14 What does Haggai want the people to know from this parable?

2:15-17 Why is the Lord sending all sorts of difficulty and trials their way?

#4 - Consider the greater kingdom that is coming (2:20-23)

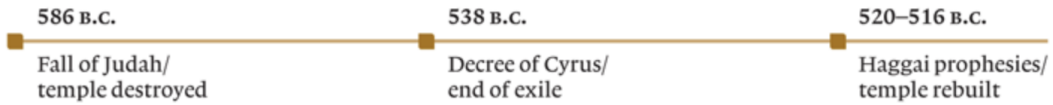
2:20-22 - What is the LORD promising to do to the other kingdoms and their strength?

2:23 - What do you think Zerubbabel and his ring symbolizes in this prophecy?

Closing Thought: Would you agree that the theme of Haggai (“Setting Your Heart”) really summarizes all of Jesus’ teaching? Can you think of any of the Gospel verses that say something similar?

Background Info: Haggai (ESV Study Bible)

Timeline



c. 520 B.C.

Haggai prophesied to the people of Jerusalem after they had returned from Babylon in 538 B.C. The walls and temple of Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Within a year after returning from Babylon, the people had laid the foundation for the new temple, but by Haggai's time they had still not completed it. Haggai, together with Zechariah, called upon the people to stop focusing on their own economic well-being and complete the temple.

