

Minor Prophets
Haggai
Lesson 2

Text: **Haggai 2:1-23**

Intro: Last week we looked at getting the people of God back to work on the temple. But, as it has been said, it is one thing to get the people to work, and another thing to keep them working. This was the task of Haggai, to encourage them to continue to work on the temple, and to submit themselves, and their lives to the will of God. Haggai is going to do it by giving three messages of encouragement. Three messages that will encourage them to focus on: Looking up to God, Looking in at Self, and Looking ahead to the future.

I. Three messages of encouragement and focus, **2:1-2:23**

A. Look up to God, **Vs.1-9**

i. **Discouragement happens,**

- a) When the foundation of the temple was laid, the older generation that had saw the original temple became sorrowful, (**See Ezra 3:8-13**)
 - they compared what they had to what they have,
 - We need to be careful of this, often times it is like the song, the older I get the better I was, is true.
 - We tend to filter things through the lens of life, so what was hard, we tend to filter and say but it led me to and then we understand and we don't view it as hard.
- b) The people compared the two,
 - remember the times were different, and the circumstances were different.
 - The original temple was beautiful, and had all the beauty that Israel was able to bestow on it. (they brought silver, gold, fine linen, silk, blues, purples, etc...)
 - but now under a forging power their resources are going to be much more limited.
 - Where Cyrus, and Darius may allow the temple to be built, it is unlikely they will supply the gold to line the walls of it.
- c) Haggai brought his message on the last day of the feast of tabernacles,
 - (**See Lev. 23:34-43**)
 - so in order to attack discouragement head on, he brought this message to focus not on the temple, but God.
 - An interesting thing about bringing this message during the feast of tabernacle is that it was on this day that Solomon dedicated the first temple.
 - **See I Kings 8:2**
 - So what was the purpose of the temple?
 - Was it so that it would be a beautiful place that the Hebrews could take pride in?
 - Or, was it something else? Perhaps it wasn't about the temple, but about the presence of God,
 - it was a place for God to abide.

ii. **Encouraged to Look up to God, Vs.4-9**

- a) there is no use denying the fact that the new temple was inferior to the original ,
- But, Haggai still wanted to encourage the Nation to:
- b) BE STRONG, Vs, 4
- notice once again, the top down process.
 - If the people in charge are discouraged, the nation will become as well.
 - It is important to keep the leaders encouraged.
 - In the feast of tabernacle, the book of Deuteronomy was to be read out loud,
 - and in it three times Moses encouraged the people and Joshua to “Be strong”
 - **See Deu. 31:6,7&23**
 - It may also make the people remember that God even told Joshua to be strong three times (**Joshua 1:6,7&9**)
 - When King David charged Solomon with the building of the temple, three times he told him to be strong,
 - **I Chro. 23:13, 28:10,20** “Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do *it*....And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do *it*: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, *will be* with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. ” (**28:10&20**)
 - so the words be strong were important to the nation, and to be took seriously.
- c) Why? What could help them to be strong,
- it is one thing to encourage someone to be strong, but it is another to give them reason to be strong,
 - Because God is with you, **Vs.4**
 - We can also have the same encouragement to be strong because of the promise of God, He will never leave us or forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5**)
- d) It is about the covenant,
- **vs.5 – II Corinthians 1:20** “For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”
 - In the original temple, after the construction and dedication the “Presence” of God dwelled in it,
 - and the same promise was to be fulfilled with the people now, that God would dwell among His people.
- e) Not only about His presence but also His word, vs.6-9
- notice he tells the gold and silver is His **vs.8**
 - I think that encourages them to not focus on what the temple had in it, since God owns the gold and silver, if He wants it there, He can have it there.
 - This is also a way of saying the same thing God promised Moses in **Exodus 34**, I will send my presence and give my provision,
 - if the Gold and Silver belong to Him, then He can supply any need.
 - Apart form the Provision, How important is the presence of God in our church and lives today?
 - A.W.Tozer said “If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of this world, much of what is going on in our churches would go right on.
- f) So we can be encouraged because of His Presence, but we can also be encouraged because of His Promise,

- **Vs.7** is quoted in **Hebrews 12:26&27** “Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.²⁷And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ”
- the desire of all nations has been used as a title for the messiah
- g) God not only promises His presence in the future, but He also promises Peace,
 - How many times is Jesus referred to as the Prince of Peace,
 - Jerusalem the city of Peace,
 - When God sets His throne up on earth, He will bring Peace as well.

B. Two Simple Questions,

i. **Is Holiness Transferable? Vs.10-12**

- a) Haggai asked a simple question, if a person is carrying a portion of the sacrifice, and it touch something else, is that object, or person holy?
 - The meat offered to the Lord was very serious,
 - The meat had to be used as the Law prescribed, and there was a certain way to deal with it,
 - it had to be only a certain portion, it had to be ate in a certain place, in a certain manner, and the left overs were to be treated a certain way.
 - But as the priest or person was carrying it, this is the question.
- b) The answer is No, Holiness cannot be transferred like that between objects,
- c) Or can it?
 - Under the law, it couldn't be, but what about us today? Is holiness transferable today?
 - What about Righteousness,
 - we know under the Law, it was incapable to produce righteousness, but under Grace, where does Righteousness come from?
 - **II Corinthians 5:21** “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
 - but for the purpose of this question, he wanted to point out, the people working on the temple could not make it holy, Holiness only comes form God.

ii. **The Second Question, Can Uncleanness be Transferred?**

- a) If someone were to touch a dead body, would that person become unclean under the law?
 - **Numbers 13:19** “Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the **tabernacle** of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel:”
 - Yes, we see this when Joseph of Armeathea and Nicodemus ask for the body of Jesus, they would have been rendered ceremonially unclean.
- b) With the first point, the Nation could not produce holiness on the temple, it took God to do that,
 - But, uncleanness could come form them,
 - that is to say because of their action they can cause the place of God to be corrupt.
 - We see the same thing in ministries today, where the acts of man have corrupted the things of God.
 - **vs.14-19** is a warning to the people that God will hold them accountable for

their actions.

- After all they had been through God was still having a hard time getting them to be obedient and trust Him.
- God wanted them to turn to Him and trust Him with their entire heart.

c) Haggai was issuing a call to repentance,

- remember the reason they were back in Jerusalem? To rebuild the temple, but what did they do?
- Haggai was reminding them what **II Chronicles 7:14** says “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humblethemselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”