

# Haggai

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please be seated. Turn with me if you've got your Bible to Haggai. Now it's not a book we commonly look at. In fact I've scarcely had a look at this book before so it's been somewhat of a learning for me to take a look at this book. Now to help you it's the third book from the end of the Old Testament.

The third book from the end of your Old Testament. I know we normally have Bibles to share but we've just in short supply we've got a problem with access so we've got to try to get them out there's some in storage.

So I'm sorry I can't give you a Bible and we're not showing the words so if you don't have the Bible maybe look on your neighbour's Bible or just try to follow along because we're going to walk through this book together.

Haggai. It's a neglected book you could say of the Bible. An obscure book. One you don't generally refer to and I thought how could we search this book and find something meaningful something for us today.

Because God's word is for today. It's for our learning. As much as some would negate some parts of it that that's for others. It's all for our learning. The comfort of the scriptures.

[ 1 : 15 ] And there's a relevant message here for us. Haggai. The third book from the end of your Old Testament. To set the scene, the context here, about 50,000 Jews had gone back, had got back to Jerusalem from Babylon. 50,000. They'd been in captivity 50 years.

And while they had been in captivity, in bondage, the temple that Solomon had built was destroyed. So the people began to rebuild the temple. This was 536 BC. They started strong. There was much enthusiasm. They wanted to see the temple restored.

But things changed. The people stopped working. The people of Judah had become discouraged. They had all that excitement at the beginning. Saved. Redeemed. Taken out of bondage. Out of captivity. Out of Babylon.

Excitement. But it had waned. It had worn off. And also the excitement of rebuilding the temple. Which should have been something precious and important. But the project was put on hold.

The people had given up. They'd downed tools. And for about 17 years then, they did no more work on the temple.

[ 2 : 44 ] They had forgotten God. You could reflect. They had focused on other things. Such that they had focused on their own interests. And their own comforts.

What was at the heart of such an issue, of such a problem, wrong priorities. At the time, commentators say there was some opposition there.

They'd faced opposition. You know, it was a tough time. Things got tough. They got weary. They'd lost interest and energy. Discouragement setting. They were distracted.

That was the setting for the book of Haggai. God now raised up the prophet Haggai to call the people back to the task. To the work.

It was 520 BC. 520 years before Christ. And by now many of the people could no longer remember the temple that was. Solomon's temple.

[ 3 : 45 ] It had been destroyed some 66 years earlier. Haggai. It teaches for us some lessons today. Some things we can learn today. Put first things first.

Priorities. Haggai from verse 1. We're going to walk through the book and I'll comment as we go.

From verse 1 of Haggai 1. Verse 1. In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedek, the high priest, saying.

Verse 1 tells us the word of the Lord came. And we see this referred through the book. The word of the Lord. It came by the prophet. The word of God. This was the supreme authority.

And it still is today. The word of God. The word of the Lord is our supreme authority. Here is what sustains us. Here is what guides us. Here is the truth. The truth of all truths.

The very truth. Nothing but the truth. It feeds our soul. They still appoint citizens and MPs and presidents today on this book because it's the authority.

[ 5 : 07 ] It's the standard. God's direction for life. The word of the Lord. God answers for us our deepest needs through his word, through his voice, his book, the book of God. And this book opens with a problem.

The word of the Lord came. And verse 2. Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying. The people say the time is not come. The time that the Lord's house should be built.

Here it was. The temple was in ruins. Now the temple is the important truth. It's important throughout the Bible. The meeting place. The dwelling place.

The gathering place. The appearing place of the presence of God. It represented communion with the Lord throughout the word. Through the book.

It's the communion of God with his own people. And throughout the Old Testament we see the temple, the tabernacle. It was such a place. It was important. A place where God would dwell with his people.

[ 6 : 04 ] Where they could see his glory. God was present. God was with us. Emmanuel. And in the New Testament the Lord Jesus was the word made flesh. And dwelt amongst us.

And he displayed the glory of God. And for us today, each individual believer, one by one by one. There's lots of temples here this morning. The temple of the living God.

The very body of every believer is that dwelling place. Is that temple of God. And your purpose is to glorify God. That's your purpose. That's why you are here.

This is the vital reason why the temple was important. And it had to be rebuilt. So that God could dwell amongst the people. God could dwell amongst them. So what was the hold up?

What was the problem? Now the people had various excuses. Reasons. Lame excuses really. People were saying, it's not a good time right now.

[ 7 : 03 ] It's not a good time right now. There'll be some more convenient time. There'll be some other time when it's going to be more convenient.

More comfortable. And some people consider that likewise now. The things of God. They are secondary. They are something that can be put off. And put on the back burner.

Something that I'll get to that. I'll get to get deeper and stronger with God. So later. Later on. They think they have time enough to take things easy for the meantime.

To put off what God has called them to do. Oh, it's not the right time. You know, oh, I don't feel the... God's not moving me that way.

That can be very spiritual. Oh, I've got to pray about it. You know, I've got to pray about it for a few months. You know, they get very spiritual about... Get on with it.

[ 8 : 07 ] Oh, it doesn't feel the right time for me right now. But really, it's a cop-out, isn't it? An excuse. A lame excuse. When God is calling us to do, don't delay.

God says the time to build is now. It's now. Verse 3. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet. We're in Haggai chapter 1, verse 3. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, verse 4.

Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your sealed houses? And this house lie waste. Here were the people that were back in Jerusalem. They were redeemed, set free, saved.

Taken out of bondage, out of captivity, into the promised land, blessed by God. Well, the Lord had saved them. He'd given them so much. Yet now they got busy building their homes for themselves. They got busy with other things. They, instead of being mindful of their mission to build a temple, materialism had taken hold of them. They got careless.

[ 9 : 11 ] They got to put their own comfort and conveniences ahead of God's will. Other things crowded him out. Other things crowded out the Lord and what he wanted for them what really mattered, what really counted.

The flesh, the world, the distractions, such that they pleased themselves. So they built their comfortable houses. They placed their other interests ahead of the work of God.

And meantime, they neglected the temple. They neglected the things of God, the work of God, such that the temple lay in ruins. Worship was neglected.

They slacked off big time. And their spiritual life was forsaken. It was weakened. It was lacking. They put off doing God's will.

Can't we make that mistake? Don't we? I do. Look at where the temple should have been, what it should have been, what it could have been. But it was a pile of rubble, of just a pile of waste, a rubbish dump, as it were, just weeds and waste.

[10:17] It laid waste. They kept putting it off such that cobwebs and weeds and dust just covered things. Sounds a bit like my shed at home.

It's already, I've got it nice and tidy, but there's cobwebs there already. It doesn't take long for the spiders to go in, does it? And I've got some books and some of the mice in my house have devoured more of my books than I have.

You see some of the books at my place and the mice have been eating them. And it's like that, isn't it? Things get laid waste and they go to wreck and ruin. And that was like it for the people of God here.

They just kept putting it off. It was laid waste. It was just rubble and a pile of bricks, as it were. And meanwhile, expensive wood covered the walls of their homes.

Oh, we'll spare no expense. We'll get our homes fitted out, as it were. And so their houses weren't just plain stone. It says that they were sealed houses.

[11:20] They had panels and wood fittings such that they spared no expense for themselves. And the wood on their walls was really a luxury, but they didn't hold back from that.

So Haggai urged the people. He showed them they had given themselves the best, but they had neglected to build the temple. Oh, there's not enough money for that. There's not enough time for that.

We don't have the energy for that. It's not the right time for that. There was excuse after excuse.

They were not being honest. What we count important, we'll make time for, won't we?

Won't we? We will. I've heard that put even in a worldly setting with time management experts. You know, if something is really important to you, you'll make it happen.

You'll make it happen. So they weren't really being honest. Haggai then cries out, verse 5, consider your ways. He says, now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

[12:23] He says, hey, it's time. Just take stock here. Let's do a stock take. Let's just take an inventory. Let's do some self-evaluation here. Let's really be honest with God here today.

Let's take a look at ourselves, he says. Take a note, he says. Consider your ways. Consider your standing. Your skewed priorities. Your spiritual poverty.

Your selfishness. Verse 6. You have sown much and bring in little. Here they were, sowing and sowing but reaping little. But you have not enough.

You drink, but you are not filled with drink. You clothe you, but there is none warm. And he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. What should have been a temple for the glory of God was just a pile of stone.

A pile of waste. And Haggai's challenging here the people. He says, they were doing so much other things. There's a lot of work going on. They were very busy, but it was really a waste.

[13:23] Now, I put to you today, people can waste time. Waste energy. Waste a life. Verse 7. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

Haggai is saying, consider your ways. What is really important to you? Where is your love? Where is your heart? Put God first. Keep God at the centre.

What is the most important for us is to do God's will. To do that. The people were putting it off. It's not the right time. Oh, I'm kind of busy right now.

I've got this and that to do. Oh, I'll get to it. One day. Like the man in the New Testament. Oh, you almost persuade me.

I'm almost a Christian. You almost persuade me. I'm just missing out. God's best.

[14:20] They were putting it off. It's not the right time. I'm kind of tied up. I'm pretty busy right now. I'll get around to it someday. I'll think about spiritual things one day. One day.

Tomorrow. Tomorrow. Tomorrow. Haggai is saying now. Now is the right time. Now is the time to get right with God. Now is the time.

Stop putting it off. Getting things sorted. What matters is to get things sorted with God. To do business with God. Today. Today. It's the only day with God.

Isn't it? The way to get started is to quit talking and start doing. Many people are all blab, blab, blab. Talking about spiritual intent.

But never putting it into action. Says the word is a lamp unto my feet. One foot after the other.

[15:15] Isn't it? The way to go. One foot after the other. God wants you to move your feet. It's a word. It's a lamp unto your feet. Obey the Lord. When this happens on the inside of us.

The Lord says I will be glorified. When you give him first place. We find joy there. In God's presence. In God's pleasure. Haggai urges them on.

Verse 8. He urges them on to action. Verse 8 of Haggai 1. There's only two chapters. We're nearly there. Through first chapter. Go up to the mountain and bring word.

And build the house. And I will take pleasure in it. And I will be glorified. I will be glorified. Saith the Lord. Verse 9. You looked for much. And lo, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I did blow upon it.

Why? Saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste. And you run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew.

[16:10] And the earth is stayed from her fruit. God's challenging them here. That they're under discipline from God. They were busy, busy, busy.

Running here, running there. Yet missing what mattered. He says you're running every man to his own house. But my house lies waste. They had neglected God in their lives.

And they lost out because of it. All their efforts in other things was in vain. And as time went by, they found dissatisfaction. Their efforts were unfruitful.

They planted but harvested next to nothing. They watched for rain but received none. They ate but were not filled. They were dressed but not warmed. They earned wages and put it in a bag of holes. The principle here is that life outside of the blessings of God is empty and vain. The people were not living a life blessed because they neglected what God had intended them to be not only the centre of the city but the centre of their lives, his house.

[17:15] In other words, the gathering of his people, the worship of God, it should be central. It should be number one. Verse 11. And I called for a drought upon the land and upon the mountains and upon the corn and upon the new wine and upon the oil and upon that which the ground bringeth forth and upon men and upon cattle and upon all the labour of the hands.

God's saying here is we held his blessing from them. What loss, what regret, what lack when we diverted from God's call. They were missing out on God's blessing because of their disobedience. They were losing out. What do we see next? We see a turnaround. Haggai says now is the time. Rebuild. And we see the people obeyed and did fear the Lord.

They received the word and they took action. God worked in conviction and the people responded in faith. Now it's good to obey the Lord straight away.

Now just to interrupt this message for a public announcement, is the air conditioning working? I know David's looking at it. Maybe turn it off and on again just to make sure it's all happening.

[18:32] It is working? All right. All right, that's okay. I just want you to be comforted with the comfort of the scriptures and the comfort of the air conditioning. Let's get warm in here.

Look, it's good to obey the Lord straight away. Verse 12. Then Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Josedek, 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 did fear before the Lord.

Haggai saying, consider your ways, and the people hearkened. They heard the words of the prophet. They heard the voice of God. They heard that God was sending this man and they feared the Lord.

They were moved to obedience. There was a conviction of conscience, a repentance, a confession, so they could worship God. They got sorted. They got things sorted before God.

The fear of God should move us too, shouldn't it? That we take it seriously enough, that we take this seriously, this book, such that we treasure its truth and obey it.

[19:46] The fear of God should move us. It should mobilise us. And notice here next that the people had a unity of purpose. They obeyed the voice of the Lord.

They feared before God. There was a united purpose as God moved on them as a people. And he says to them, as he does to us, I am with you.

Next we see verse 13. Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the Lord. Okay, we've covered a bit of ground so far.

That's just the introduction so far to this sermon. Now we'll get to the three points. You've always got to, you know, Baptists have always got our three points. So this brings us to the first of three points I'd like to make here today from Haggai.

Three things that stood out to me. And number one is be stirred. Now I like to stir people, don't you? We should be stirred as the people of God.

[ 20 : 47 ] We should be stirred up. The people got busy and the Lord stirred up the leaders now. Verse 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 Josedek, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people.

And they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God. In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year, of Darius the king. Be stirred.

Be stirred. People of God. And we should come to church, to the gathering together, to provoke one another. Be provocative unto love.

Amen. Not hate. Love. Provoke unto love. And to not provoke to disharmony, but to provoke unto good works.

To love unto good works. We should provoke in that way, shouldn't we? I know I was kind of reflecting on some of my readings lately, working through Exodus, and the amount of times the people murmured.

[ 21 : 57 ] They murmured. They murmured. They murmured. You know, and Moses said, you're not just, you're not murmuring just against me, you're actually murmuring against God. You know, we need to be stirred up in a good way, not to be stirred up, be a murmurer or a complainer, but to be stirred up, to be a doer of God's will.

And God can, and he does stir us up as we desire to seek and to do his will. And the leadership was stirred now from their indifference to obey God's voice.

When we are slack, we need to be stirred, don't we? Sometimes people can be like a Nathan to you, can't they? And just sort of tell it like it is.

And we've got to receive it sometimes. Be stirred up. Be stirred up like Haggai stirred, them up. As God stirred them up. As God stirred up their spirit.

Stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the civil governor. Stirred up the spirit of Joshua, the spiritual leader. And then he stirred up the spirit of all the people.

[ 23 : 02 ] Stirred up. We can get slack. I'm speaking for myself. We can get slack. I can get slack. And I need to be stirred up. Stirred up from apathy.

Stirred up from complacency. Stirred up from indifference. Stirred up in our spirit. Stirred up. Don't we need to be stirred up? Stirred up spiritually like Paul was back there in Athens.

In Acts 17 verse 16. And I've stood in that place. Where Athens stood. On Mars Hill. Where Paul preached. And I've been to that city of Athens.

In Acts 17 verse 16. Now while Paul waited for them at Athens. His spirit was stirred up in him. When he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. And I've been, as I say, Julie and I had the privilege of this trip of a lifetime.

To go to Athens. And we saw beautifully carved statues. Beautifully carved images. And temples. What's left of them.

[ 24 : 06 ] Yet for us we know they represent idols of wickedness. False gods. And Paul when he saw this city abounding in these false images and statues and icons.

And objects of worship. He saw them for what they were. Idols. And his spirit was stirred up in him. May the Lord move on us too.

To be stirred up. When we see the idolatry of our world. When we see the sickness of our society. And it's sliding. Ever sliding. Into the pit.

That we realise and recognise the false gods. That abound all around us. And may our spirit be stirred up within us. As it was with them. Haggai chapter 2 now.

We're halfway there. Verse 1. In the seventh month. In the one and twentieth day of the month. Came the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai. Saying. Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel.

[ 25 : 02 ] Governor of Judah. And to Joshua the son of Josedek. The high priest. And to the residue of the people. Saying. And Haggai gave them three questions. Now there's something. There's four sermons in Haggai. But there's three questions now. So he's a three point sermon here. Verse 3. Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? And how do you see it now?

Is it not in your eyes in comparison? Of it as nothing. Three questions. The people were getting discouraged. He's saying. You remember what it was like. You that were left. You that were there. In Solomon's day.

What the temple was. And that previous temple that Solomon had built. Was amazing. It was covered in gold. And decorated with beautiful ornaments. No expense was spared. And in comparison. This temple that they were to build. To rebuild. Was going to be quite plain. And basic. Haggai then gave them three commands.

[ 25 : 59 ] He says. In this season of discouragement. You know. When we can look at. Oh. It's just basic. It's just simple. It's not going to be as good as Solomon's temple. He tells them three things.

He says. Be strong. Work. And fear not. Be strong. Verse 4. Work. Verse 4 through 5. Fear not. Verse 5.

He told them. Take courage. Be strong. God's presence with them. So. Firstly. Number one. Is. Be stirred. And secondly. I put to you. Brother. Sister. Here today.

Be strong. Be strong. Verse 4. Yet now be strong. O Zerubbabel. Saith the Lord. And be strong. O Joshua. Son of Josedek. The high priest. And be strong. All you people of the land.

Saith the Lord. Be strong. And work. For I am with you. Saith the Lord of hosts. The people had grown weak. And lacked spiritual strength. And the Lord says through Haggai.

[ 26 : 53 ] Be strong. Be strengthened. So. A command through the word of God. And I like to use that as a bit of a greeting. Or a farewell. With a brother or sister. As we meet or part.

Be strong. In the Lord. Be strong. In the Lord. Whatever's going on for you. You might be going through. Time of loss. Of grieving. Of sickness. Of sadness.

Of hardship. Yet God says unto you. Be strong. Be strong. When you are weak. Be strong. When you are failing.

Be strong. In the Lord. And in the power. Of his might. Tap into his unlimited resources. Find his strength. His power. In your weakness.

In your lack. Our God is a present help. In time of trouble. We can be strong. We can know his strength. Why? Again. He says. For I am with you.

[ 27 : 49 ] That's why we can be strong. Isn't it? That's how we can be strong. Why? For I am with you. As David had encouraged his own son Solomon.

At the building of the first temple. In 1 Chronicles 28 20. 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. Again. I will be with thee. He will not fail thee. Nor forsake thee. Until they have finished all the work.

For the service of the Lord. Of the Lord. The house of the Lord. So. Brothers. Sister. Here this morning. You might say. Preacher. I'm feeling weak. I'm feeling lacking. I'm slacking.

I'm struggling. Be strong. Be strong. He will not fail thee. Be strong. He will not forsake thee. Haggai says now to the people.

[ 28 : 44 ] At this building of the second temple. Be strong. And go to work. God gives us strength for the job. He's called us to do. He's given us to accomplish.

Like Colossians 1 29. Where Paul says. Where unto I also labour. You know. That he wants to. To declare Christ. Striving according to his working.

Which worketh in me mightily. And you know. We don't make much of. The Greek this. And the Greek that. But this word worketh. Is energeo. I'd like some of that.

Wouldn't you? I'd like a bit of energeo. He's working in me mightily. It's energeo. Don't we need some energy? Some. Some holy ghost energy.

As it were. Some holy ghost. Might and power. And enabling. In that striving. His striving within. That God would give us. That God sent. God given.

[ 29 : 38 ] Heaven sent. Divine power. Power. And might. That capacity. That strength. That enabling. That equipping. That power. That might. That energeo. God's strength.

To help us overcome. Every obstacle. He says. Be strong. And his. Working. Is going to work in you. Energeo. Mightily.

Be strong. And fear not. Verse 5. Of Haggai 2. According to the word. That I covenanted with you. When you came out of Egypt. So my spirit. Remaineth among you. Fear ye not.

Now you might say. Look I've got much opposition. There's much trial. There's much against me. There's much that doesn't look like it's going to work out. Fear not. Fear not.

Fear not. Why? Because God's spirit. Is with you. My spirit. Remaineth among you. Fear ye not. And God's spirit. Will enable. He will empower you. He will supply.

[ 30 : 35 ] It was a practical work that had to be done. But yet a spiritual one too. And God gives us practical things to do. We've all got to make a living. To support our family. To care for practical needs of life.

But God gives us something beyond that. His will. And that spiritual work that he's called us to. And he'll empower you by his spirit. His spirit is with you. So here we are.

Back to Haggai's situation. Back to Jerusalem. For 16 years. The whole work has been hindered. The saints have been discouraged. Nothing's happening. Oh. We'll get to it.

Haggai. One day. God says the time is now. Rebuild now. And he gives words of promise and prophecy. Verse 6. For thus saith the Lord of hosts.

Yet once it is a little while. And I will shake the heavens. And the earth. And the sea. And the dry land. Now I can't shake this pulpit. They've bolted it down.

[ 31 : 32 ] But I would have made a good kind of sermon illustration. Just rocking the pulpit around. But I'll get told off if I break it. But no. There's a shaking. And a rocking. And a reeling. There's a sense where the whole world.

The whole heaven. And earth. And sea. And dry land. Is going to be shaken. Brother. Sister. There's a shaking going to happen. There's going to be a climate change. Isn't there? The whole world.

The whole planet. The whole system. The whole solar system. The whole box and dice is going to get shaken. And things are going to start to fall out of place. And get thrown upside down.

And inside out. And there's a shaking ahead. It's telling us for this world. But know this dear child of God. You might be saying. I'm having that time right now. Things are getting shaken right now.

Yes dear child of God. When you may face such a time. When there's a lot of shaking going on. You have a refuge. You have a refuge. Amen.

[ 32 : 29 ] You have a refuge. And God further promises. In this time of shaking. Of course. There's a sense where some of this is yet future. The desire of all nations shall come.

The desire of all nations. The one whom our heart should desire. The one whom our heart should delight in. The one who should possess us. And obsess us. And captivate us.

The desire of all nations shall come. And I will fill this house with glory. He says that in verse 7. I will shake all nations. And the desire of all nations shall come. And I will fill this house with glory.

Saith the Lord of hosts. Christ is coming. Christ is coming. And this humble temple. Was to be honoured with his very presence. With the very glorious presence of the Messiah himself.

Here they were labouring. Oh this temple is pretty basic. It's just kind of. It's kind of C grade. It's not gold standard. It's not Solomon's temple standard.

[ 33 : 26 ] It's not arrayed and decorated. And decked out with gold. And this and that. It's a very humble place. Yet Christ. Would step through that threshold.

Christ would be there. Teaching the people. Healing the people. Throwing out the money changers. Declaring the truth. Expounding the word of God.

Christ is coming. His very glorious presence will be here. So while they could have been so discouraged. As I thought. These humble. Poor efforts that they make. In this humble temple they were building.

That will never be as grand as Solomon's temple. While it was small and simple in comparison. Yet God was saying. Although it was small. This latter temple.

Would be more glorious than the first. Now I understand Herod refurbished that second temple. But the point is that this second temple.

[ 34 : 22 ] They were thinking. Oh this is not really. It's pretty weak. Our efforts are weak. And inadequate. But in the promise that was to be fulfilled. Christ would walk through the doors of that temple.

The son of God would walk in. And be there. In that very place. So we can seek sometimes for our humble efforts. For the weak efforts that we can ever summon. And give of ourselves.

Of our lives. How insignificant it can be. How inadequate. How slight we might think our impact is. When you're humbly knocking on doors.

And reaching out to people. When you're labouring behind the scenes. When you're faithfully serving. Faithfully praying. Faithfully giving. Faithfully studying. When you're faithfully gathering. And you think there's not much to show for this. Yet Christ is here. Christ is here. And that's what counts. Isn't it? And we might reckon ourselves not much. Inadequate.

[ 35 : 21 ] Lacking. Our efforts. Our labours. Seems slight. And insufficient. But the temple they were building. Was to be the very one. The Lord Jesus would bless.

With his very presence. And so. The people were discouraged. They thought their efforts and abilities were frail. Yet God promises a greater glory. A greater glory. And so too you can be encouraged.

Dear brother. Dear sister. That the weakest efforts you give. Are yet. A sacrifice of praise. The weakest attempt. And gift.

And. Devotion. And service. That you can render. Even the most practical things. Driving a bus to pick up people. Putting yourself out. Those weak efforts.

Those things. You think. Oh. This is just. I'm just a doorkeeper. In the house of the Lord. But wow. That's a blessing. Isn't it? Just to be a doorkeeper. Just to be a servant.

[ 36 : 17 ] Wow. That's heavenly. Joy. That's. That's. That's an eternal. Gain. An eternal. Joy in that. That weak service.

We can render. And so be encouraged. To whatever humble ways. You can do something for God. Just be faithful. Verse 8. The silver is mine.

And the gold is mine. Saith the Lord of hosts. Verse 9. The glory of this latter house. Shall be greater. Than of the former. Saith the Lord of hosts. So whilst this temple.

They were rebuilding. Out of that pile of waste. And rubble. The Lord promised. That the final. Latter glory. Will be greater. Than its former glory. This will be greater.

Than Solomon's temple. Because greater than Solomon is here. Greater than Solomon is here. The Lord promised to bring peace. To the site of the temple. Jerusalem. So we see. That this aspect.

[ 37 : 13 ] Is yet future. The fulfillment here. Is yet future. The millennial reign. Lasting peace. Will only come. When the Messiah returns. To rule and reign. And we pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

But ultimately. It's only when Christ comes. That that peace. Will be fully realized. So when we pray. For the peace of Jerusalem. What are we praying for? Lord Jesus. Come quickly. And he says to you.

Fear not. He says to you. I will give peace. The last part of. That verse there. Is. And in this place. Will I give peace. Saith the Lord of hosts. And. Brother.

Sister. Present turmoil. Present trouble. Needn't stop you from knowing. God's. Absolute peace. Doesn't it? The peace that passes all understanding. That keeps our hearts and minds. Through Christ Jesus. His promise. Is true. Then. And now. Today.

[ 38 : 09 ] As it ever was. I. Will. Give. Peace. Peace. And there's many references we could touch on. Psalm 85 says. He will speak peace.

Unto his people. Psalm 85 verse 8. Paul in his message of proclamation. Preach peace by Jesus Christ.

Acts 10. 36. Actually that could be Peter. Acts 10. 36. You can check that later. Preaching peace. By preaching. By preaching. By preaching. By preaching peace. By Jesus Christ.

That was the message. Peace with God. The peace from God. The peace of God. Peace with God. Colossians 1. 20. Having made peace. Through the blood. Of his cross. Peace.

People of God. Searching ones. You'll only find peace. When you find the prince of peace. Peace. He is the ultimate. Isn't he? And believe it.

[ 39 : 08 ] When you're struggling. When you're going through testing. And trouble. He is your peace. He is my peace. He's broken down every wall. He is our peace. And God grants peace of mind.

As we trust him. And know he is in control. So we've seen. Number one. Be stirred. Number two. Be strong. And our third point. Our third and final point. You'll be pleased to know.

Is. Be saints. Be saints. Now. How would I get this? We see from verse 10. Haggai. Haggai 2. From verse 10. He tells about defilement.

He talks about sin. And about holiness. Verse 10 through 19. Verse 10. In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month. In the second year of Darius.

Came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet. The word of the Lord. It came again. This fourth time. Thus saith the Lord of hosts. Ask now the priest concerning the law. Saying. If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment.

[ 40 : 08 ] And with his skirt to touch bread or pottage or wine or oil. Or any meat. Shall it be holy? And the priest answered and said no. Then said Haggai. If one that is unclean by a dead body.

Touch any of these. Shall it be unclean? And the priest answered and said. It shall be unclean. Excuse me. Now we know. The Old Testament times.

Of that which was declared clean. That which was declared unclean. That which was defiled. That which was purified. And so the context. The spiritual learnings here.

It's all about that sense of holiness. The motto of the people of Israel. Was holiness unto the Lord. They would have that emblazoned. On their garments.

Holiness unto the Lord. On their vessels. Holiness unto the Lord. And Haggai shows us here. How an unclean people. Cannot build a holy temple. Now we can go through the motions.

[ 41 : 05 ] The activities. The outward. But the inward's got to be right. The inward has to be right. And God's spirit fills clean vessels. Our Lord calls us to be saints.

Now. I've got to tell you this morning. That the Pope has not declared me a saint yet. And I don't have to wait till I die. For him or anybody else to say I'm a saint.

Because God says I'm a saint. God says you're a saint. By. Receiving Christ as your Lord and Saviour. There's no man can declare a saint.

Only God. And God declares us saints. Holy ones. Holy ones. That's what it means. Called to be holy. And there's a truth here that we are saints.

And you may not feel like it sometimes. You know. If people joke and say. Oh. He's no saint. But if he's saved by the blood of grace of God. He is a saint.

[ 42 : 04 ] God's called you. Called you holy. And. The sense just to. Capture it here. From these verses. Is that holiness does not come by touching something holy.

There's people who teach this kind of thing. Isn't there? I saw something lately. There's some. Something on my Facebook feed. There's some. Holy. Divine teacher coming over from some. Eastern country. And you can sit at his feet.

And hear his pearls of wisdom. And he might even lay hands on you. And utter some incantations over you. And there's a picture of this woman bowing down. And kind of worshipping this man.

Some people think that's how I get holy.

By going and seeing some swami. Some kind of guru. Some even in Christian circles think. Oh it's. I've got to go and get so and so to pray over me.

And lay hands on me. And there's this religious spooky superstitious stuff. That people go on and think. Oh I'll get holy by being around holy items.

[ 43 : 04 ] As if that's going to make you acceptable to God. And we know some people can spend megabucks going on pilgrimages to places and settings and temples.

And you know you hear even in Luther's day he was climbing some steps with broken glass on it. And suffering. And some people flagellate themselves don't they.

I've got to punish myself. I've got to do something to make myself holy. I've got to fast. I've got to touch the priest's garment. I've got to be sprinkled with holy water. I've got to visit some holy shrine.

I've got to touch some holy statue. Or see some holy bones. Or some holy relics. Or some holy. Whether it be supposedly some items.

The holy cross. There might be some alleged items that were biblical items. In some holy shrine or holy setting. And some people even amongst us.

[ 44 : 06 ] Could maybe think. Oh if I go to church. I will be holy. If I hang scripture verses on my walls. If I carry around a bible. I'll make sure it's a really big one.

And that will make me look like I'm holy. And they imagine that being around holy things. Will make them holy. But brothers and sisters holiness never comes that way. Holiness does not come by touching.

Or by going and visiting some holy place or person. Suppose it. Holiness comes. As he takes our defilement away.

We're unclean. We're defiled. And Haggai's telling the people. Unholy people can't build a holy temple.

All our frail efforts and intent. If we're not saved. It's in vain. Isn't it? You know I've been urging you. These things of being stirred.

[ 45 : 02 ] Of being strong. But what matters is that you're a saint. You've got to be a saint. Because all the work you can do is never enough. You must be cleansed from your defilement.

And so Haggai urges the people to get right with God. He warns them about sin. He tells us likewise. And there's a truth here.

He says. He tells of touching something that's dead. And in the Old Testament when they touch something dead. There was a transfer of that. There was a contamination.

There was a kind of a defilement. A contaminant. From that which was dead. And you know as our brother read before. That this world is dead.

It's dead. When you walk down the shopping centre. There's dead people walking all around you. And they may not look like in the movies. Looking like zombies. But that's what they are isn't it?

They're dead people.

[ 46 : 03 ] Walking around you. There's dead people that we work with. In our workplaces. They're dead. And there's a danger in clinging. Unto dead things.

Isn't there? The dead things. This sinful world. And it's ways of death. It's sin cursed. And so we see. I'm wrapping up here. That we need to.

As the word urges us. Be holy. Be ye holy. And the only way to be holy. Is to know the holy one. Is to know Christ. I urge you today. You might be hearing this.

And thinking. Well. I'm not sure I am a Christian. I always thought it was. If I go to church enough. Or maybe look pious. Or dress just so.

Or have a bible in my hand. Or look like I'm a Christian. Then that's all that matters. And I can do good. And be good. And that will be good enough for God. He'll weigh it up one day.

[ 47 : 00 ] And my good will outmay my bad. And he'll help me to get. Open the pearly gates. And let me in. But no. Holy things. Do not make people holy.

It's a holy God. It's a holy work. On the inside of you. That's what makes you holy. When you see. The holy one. Lift it up. For all to see.

Bleeding. Battered. Bruised. Forsaken. For you. Giving his all. As you trust him.

As he. As he. Comes to bring his. Everlasting life. That risen saviour. And lord. That master. He changes us. He makes us holy.

He changes our heart. Now. We see the last few verses. I might just. For saving time. Just. Cut it a little short here. To not cover all the details.

[ 47 : 55 ] Left in the book here. For the sake of time. Haggai. Says. Consider. Consider. He says it a couple of times. Three times or so.

Verse 18. He says. Consider. Consider. Consider. We've got some considering to do. People of God. Consider your ways. Consider your heart.

Consider your attitude. Consider your. Condition. 16 years. Israel. Were just blundering. Wasted. Time. 16.

Wasted years. They'd neglected. The holy. The holy one. And then God got their attention. And. At the close of the book. We see the.

Assurance. The promise of future judgment. On Israel's enemies. The last. Few verses. Verse 22. He will overthrow the throne. Of kingdoms. There's a promise here.

[ 48 : 53 ] That our great. Victorious. All conquering. Mighty conqueror. Our Lord Jesus will come. And he'll right. The wrongs. He'll rule. In righteousness. He'll. Take his rightful.

Rulership. Of this planet. The victorious. Mighty conqueror. He'll overthrow the kingdom. Of darkness. And to close. Verse 23. He says. I will make thee. As a signet.

He's talking to Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel. And. He says that. I will make you. A signet. I have chosen you. He's telling you. A signet.

A ring that was used. You know. Signed. Signet. Was used to stamp. To sign. To authorize. It was a sign of authority. And honor. And personal ownership. And. What was it about.

Zerubbabel. That. Made him so. Special. Zerubbabel. Was a descendant. Of the royal line. Of David. And so. The promise here in Haggai.

[ 49 : 47 ] As the final. Glorious. Promise of hope. And blessing. And joy for us. Is Christ is coming. And. He will. Take.

Rightful. Rain. Of this planet. And. As it's pictured in the man. Zerubbabel. As the one who. From whom. Christ. Would descend.

Through the bloodline. The promised Messiah. It's showing that. He will come. And. He is the chosen one. The Messiah. So.

Friends today. These are the truths. That we can. Take to heart. And. We think of Zerubbabel. His name means. Born of Babylon.

It's an interesting thought. Isn't it like our brother was sharing. Where I was. And where I am. I was born of Babylon. Born of Babylon. All of us were.

[ 50 : 47 ] We were born in this sinful. God forsaking planet. Amongst this people that are unclean. And defiled. And God denying.

Born of Babylon. Yet God raised him up for his own glory. And likewise we too. We're born of Babylon. Yet now chosen of God. That's what matters isn't it?

Isn't it? Amen. You might say. Preacher. I'm a sinner. I've fouled up. You know. Neil didn't tell us all the gory details of his sinful past. And neither will I tell you of mine.

But I was born of Babylon. Lost. Defiled. Hell bound. Now chosen of God. Lord. And so too.

You that love the Lord. He's raised you up for his own glory. He's ransomed you from sin. You're his own precious people. Delivered. Rescued.

[ 51 : 41 ] Saved. He's saved. Redeemed. And Zerubbabel foreshadows the saviour who will come and save his people. Now it took some years but ultimately the temple was rebuilt.

Despite all the delay and the lack and the inadequacy and the excuses and the waste of time. Yet God gave them grace to get it done.

Now I put to you today. We have unfinished work to do. We don't know how long we've got but we've got unfinished work to do. While we've got breath to breathe you've got unfinished work to do. Amen. Do his work. Do God's work. Don't say oh yeah oh okay preacher look I've got this and that to do. One day I'm going to go to Bible school. One day I'm going to you know put some more time into this.

Or one day I'm going to get right with God and start to just change direction. No. Now. It's time. It's time now. Don't be like the people in Haggai's day saying oh yeah I'll get around to it.

[ 52 : 44 ] We've got unfinished work to do and the time is now. God's work. It's time to build. So closing it's Haggai's message. Be stirred. Don't be slack.

Be stirred. I'm saying that to myself. I'm not saying any of you are slack. I'm saying that I'm slack. Be stirred. Secondly.

Be strong. I'm weak. I'm inadequate. I can't do anything. I know my poor efforts are lousy. Be strong. In the Lord.

In his might. In his energy. And thirdly. Be saints. You might feel. Look I don't feel like much of a saint. He's called you. He says you are washed. You are clean.

I've washed you. He says. Let's live like it. Be saints. Separated. Let's be that salt and light that our world needs. That all these dead people around you need.

[ 53 : 41 ] That message of life. That you have. On your lips. And in your heart. It's time. To build. Let's pray. Lord we bless you.

And thank you for the glory. That you gave to that humble temple. In coming. In person. As much as the weak efforts. Of men. Felt inadequate.

And discouraged. And likewise. We too Lord. At times. We can. Delay. And we can.

Make excuses for. This or that. Help us Lord. Stir us by your spirit. Stir us. Up. In our spirit. Stir us Lord.

That we won't stay. Where we are. But we'll. Be woken up. From slumber. And stir us Lord.

[ 54 : 37 ] Help us to be strong. In the weakness. Of our own flesh. And. Waywardness. Our inclination. Lord help us to. Yet. Know that strength.

That energy. That divine. Unction. And Lord. To be saints. This world needs. Salt and light. More than it ever. Has. And we need to be such a people.

Pray if there's any yet to trust you today. That they'll know. It's not. Holiness doesn't come by any doing of our own. But it comes by that. Which you have done. In dying on the cross for our sin. Rising to be our saviour. As we confess you as Lord. Help each one to know that blessed truth. And to seek. Advice. If they're yet to be sure.  
Lord that we can know that heaven. Is our home. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.