

**Haggai: Consider Your Ways
I am With You!**
Haggai 1:1-15

1. Introduction
 - 1.1 Pastor Rick just finished Matthew, preparing to teach Romans
 - 1.2 I finished Colossians earlier this year, was excited for what God had next
 - 1.2.1 Took a while to find a book, but excited for what God is doing
 - 1.3 Let's pray!
2. Message
 - 2.1 **Haggai 1:1**
 - 2.1.1 Dates given in Haggai are specific
 - 2.1.1.1 First prophecy on August 29, 520 BC (2543 years ago)
 - 2.1.2 Context of Haggai
 - 2.1.2.1 In 586, God used the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar to judge Judah
 - Israel was taken by the Assyrians 130 years earlier
 - Books of Kings and Chronicles tells the reason for judgment
 - Babylon laid waste to Jerusalem, destroyed the temple
 - 2.1.2.2 The Jews were taken to Babylon (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel & Co.)
 - Haggai was probably born in Babylon
 - 2.1.2.3 After 70 years, Jews are allowed to go back to Israel
 - 2.1.2.4 The Jewish people rebuild the foundation of the temple, restore worship
 - 2.1.2.5 Enemies in the region oppose rebuilding
 - Tell the King that the Jews are a rebellious people
 - Jews stop building
 - 2.1.3 Have to see this from Jewish perspective
 - 2.1.3.1 Temple is central to their identity
 - 2.1.3.2 Before the temple it was the tabernacle
 - 2.1.3.3 For over 670 years, Jewish people had a location for worship
 - 2.1.3.4 Rebuilding the temple was top priority for them, they got started right away

Ezra 3:8-11

⁸Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began work and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the LORD. ⁹Then Jeshua with his sons and brothers, Kadmiel with his sons, and the sons of Judah, arose as one to oversee those working on the house of God: the sons of Henadad with their sons and their brethren the Levites. ¹⁰When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. ¹¹And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: "For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

2.2 **Haggai 1:1-2**

- 2.2.1 The Jews returned to Jerusalem in 538/537
- 2.2.2 This prophecy is in 520
 - 2.2.2.1 The Jews started out well, wanting to rebuild

- 2.2.2.2 Fear of man replaced fear of God
- 2.2.3 This is important, but there's another issue
 - 2.2.3.1 It's been over 15 years
 - Fear was replaced with complacency
 - 2.2.3.2 The people have become lax in their commitment
 - 2.2.3.3 They're content to leave the temple as is
- 2.2.4 Israel is God's chosen people
 - 2.2.4.1 Separated from the world

Exodus 19:6a

⁶And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...

- 2.2.4.2 Very existence is to be a witness for God
- 2.2.4.3 The nation from which the Messiah was to come
- 2.2.5 They're acting just like any other people at this point
 - 2.2.5.1 Will always be God's chosen people
 - 2.2.5.2 No evidence of this reality at the time
 - 2.2.5.3 Much like Israel of today
 - Still God's chosen people
 - Just another secular nation far from their God
 - God has restored them to their land, they still live in bondage to sin
 - His chosen people rejected their Messiah
 - God isn't surprised, He said it would happen
- 2.2.6
- 2.3 God's response to the people **Haggai 1:3-6**
 - 2.3.1 These words would be recognizable to the people

Deuteronomy 28:30-40

³⁸“You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. ³⁹ You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. ⁴⁰ You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil; for your olives shall drop off.

- 2.3.1.1 God told Israel what to expect from disobeying His law
- 2.4 Consider your ways! **Haggai 1:7-8**
 - 2.4.1 Used twice in this section, point to different things
 - 2.4.1.1 Consider the way things are going
 - Maybe it's the weather, or inflation?
 - 2.4.1.2 Consider what you ought to be doing
 - God calls them to action, go do what you know you're supposed to!
 - 2.4.2 For the nation of Israel, they should be in right worship, at the temple, all the time
 - 2.4.2.1 Because God deserves right worship, but also as a witness to every nation
 - 2.4.3 Consider your ways reminds me of a verse in Ephesians

Ephesians 4:1

⁴I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called...

- 2.4.3.1 Paul is exhorting all believers to consider their ways
- 2.4.3.2 God is calling you to something, and we should walk in a way that is worthy of that calling

2.5 **Haggai 1:9-11**

- 2.5.1 Was it just bad weather? Did groceries just cost twice as much than last week?
- 2.5.2 Current situation is a consequence
 - 2.5.2.1 God takes responsibility for what they're experiencing
- 2.5.3 Life's situations are what they are
 - 2.5.3.1 Look inside and ask if the current situation is something you contributed to
 - 2.5.3.2 Maybe it's just part of living in a sinful world
- 2.5.4 Not this situation, it is direct consequence of their actions
 - 2.5.4.1 They became complacent, preoccupied with life to get back to the temple
 - 2.5.4.2 Took God sending a prophet to shake them awake to it

2.6 **Haggai 1:12**

- 2.6.1 Easy to look back at Israel in the Old Testament and mock
 - 2.6.1.1 From the time of leaving Egypt to building the golden calf was less than a year
 - In that time there was: manna from heaven, water from a rock, pillars of cloud and fire, God's glory covering the mountain like a cloud then like a fire
 - 2.6.1.2 "It was right in front of you, how did you miss it!"
 - Like we get it every time? We'll see how we miss it so often next week
- 2.6.2 It would be best to get it right away, no denying that
 - 2.6.2.1 God would prefer we respond correctly the first time, he knows we often won't
- 2.6.3 What's important here is that they did get it
 - 2.6.3.1 Is God saying "It's about time!" No!
 - 2.6.3.2 Would you ever say that to a new believer? I hope not
 - You'd rejoice that they finally responded
 - 2.6.3.3 That's how we should look at something like this
 - Yes, it would have been best if they just built the temple from the beginning
 - Praise God they're going to do it now
 - Best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, second best time is now

2.7 **Haggai 1:13**

- 2.7.1 This is huge
 - 2.7.1.1 Through all Israel's ups and downs, whether they acknowledged it or not, God was with them
 - 2.7.1.2 When the northern kingdom was taken, Hezekiah led the nation in trusting God
 - They still had the temple
 - Even in Hezekiah's day, prophets still came with warning

Micah 4:10b

¹⁰ ...for now you shall go forth from the city, you shall dwell in the field, and to Babylon you shall go...

- 2.7.1.3 Babylonians were nobody at this time, far away, and Assyria was the threat
 - Prophecy was 70-100 years before Babylon conquered Assyria
 - Still 15 more years after that to get to Judah
- 2.7.1.4 Eventually the Babylonians show up
 - Temple is destroyed, chosen people removed from the promised land
 - Their pride and stubbornness finally came to punishment

2.7.2 During time of exile, God withdrew His presence from Jerusalem

Ezekiel 11:22-23

²² So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. ²³ And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.

- 2.7.2.1 This was an act of judgment
 - Not since God's promise to Abraham has He removed Himself from them

2.7.3 But God is faithful, and His promises are sure

Psalms 89:8

⁸ O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty like You, O LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.

2.7.4 God chose this people, and in this verse in Haggai, He assures them that His promises do not change

2.7.4.1 They are His people, they will always be His people

2.7.4.2 He is with them - these must have been comforting words

2.8 Obviously, we live in a different time

2.8.1 There is a new covenant

2.8.2 "I am with you" made me think of another verse

Matthew 28:20b

²⁰ ...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

2.8.2.1 We just read this verse last week

2.8.2.2 From beginning to end this theme runs through the bible

- In the garden, Adam and Eve walked with God
- In the end He will dwell with us, and we will be His people, and He will be our God
- And everywhere in between is verse after verse of God's intent to be with us

2.8.3 This all culminates in the person Jesus Christ

Matthew 1:23

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

2.8.3.1 Jesus means "God saves", and He is called "God with us"

- He is the Son of God incarnate, come to save people from their sin

2.8.4 This is the heart of God

2.8.4.1 Think about this for a second

- God, eternally existent
- Perfect fellowship in the trinity
- Wants and needs for nothing
- 2.8.4.2 This book, His Word, repeatedly telling us and showing us the relationship He intends for us to have with Him
 - He wants to be with us
- 2.8.4.3 So hard for me to wrap my head around
 - This should not lead us to exalt our place at all
 - I am nothing, nobody
 - God doesn't want to be my friend cause I'm awesome
 - I'm sinful, I'm wicked, I'm nasty
 - God's love sees past all that
 - Jesus' blood paid for that
 - The Holy Spirit works in me to get rid of all that
- 2.8.5 We live in a time of loneliness
 - 2.8.5.1 Often described as an epidemic, significantly worsening as the years progress
 - 2.8.5.2 You can talk to anyone over the internet
 - You can reach more people now than ever before
 - More people have access to internet than ever before
 - 2.8.5.3 As good and important as friendship and companionship are, man cannot fill the hole that God wants to fill
- 2.8.6 But what keeps God from filling that hole? Sin
 - 2.8.6.1 For an unbeliever, God will not allow you to draw close to him
 - This is a mercy, He stays His justice
 - There is no way to God for an unbeliever
 - Jesus died on the cross to take that consequence away

John 14:6

⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

- Jesus is the way to drawing close to God
- To fill the hole of loneliness
- 2.8.6.2 Believer, you have this fellowship
 - Then why do I still feel alone sometimes?
 - Lack of faith - I doubt God's promises, or I fear some situation and forget
 - Turn to **Romans 8**
 - Ultimately, we lack confidence in the finished work of Christ
 - Not that we don't believe, but we don't believe enough
 - Hebrews tells us to come boldly into the throne room, how often are you doing that?
 - Is your prayer a powerful and transforming thing? Or do you struggle just to pay attention as your mind races?
 - When life gets heavy, are you retreating into His Word to remember His promises?

- Be honest - sometimes the weight of life draws my focus away
- It's so hard to see the good that will come out of this hurt
- It feels impossible to see how God is using this for His glory
- Family is taken away from you, friends leave you, a spouse betrays you
- God is near to the broken hearted

2.8.7 **Romans 8:28-39**

- 2.8.7.1 Do you believe that God is with you, and that nothing can come between?
- 2.8.7.2 At the risk of sounding harsh - do you think that's it?
- God is with me, I'm good now
- 2.8.7.3 This is the lack of faith I'm talking about
- If we believe that, why do the storms of life rock us so hard?
 - God wants to go deeper, He wants to take it farther
 - I should never be content, or become lax in my faith
 - **Romans 11:33-36**
 - That's the God that wants you to know Him
 - And not just a little bit of Him, He wants to prove Himself in you

2.8.8 Turn back to **Haggai 1**

2.8.9 This connects us back to the situation that Haggai is talking about

- 2.8.9.1 It's not a physical temple now
- 1 Corinthians tells us that our body is a temple

1 Corinthians 6:19

¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

- Romans 12 says that our renewed minds, prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God

2.8.9.2 The Jews got back to the promised land, reinstituted sacrifices, and then just sat there

2.8.9.3 We meet God somewhere in our life, and we sit there

- Content to know God only so much, trust Him only so much

2.9 **Haggai 1:14-15**

2.9.1 On the 21st of September, 520 B.C., the nation of Israel responded to the Lord

2.9.2 My prayer is that we would respond to the Lord

2.9.2.1 He is calling us into something deeper

2.9.2.2 Through His Word, prayer, worship, whatever avenue He is calling you into, He wants you to respond

2.9.3 The nation of Israel was God's tool as a witness of Himself

2.9.3.1 They were to be set apart, and to point all other peoples to the Living God

- Still God's chosen people

2.9.3.2 The church is His tool in this age

2.9.3.3 Our response to God in His calling to a deeper relationship with Him is in part to bear greater witness

2.9.3.4 The better you know God, the better you can share Him with others

3. Conclusion

3.1 Next week, we will see that the building of the temple didn't come without continued issues

3.2 Likewise, our Christian walk isn't perfect, because we're not perfect

3.2.1 We let our pride get in the way, we complain over stuff, we let sin take hold where it has no place to be

3.2.2 But all that is for next week!

3.3 Let's pray!

3.4 Last song