

It is true that God has a plan for your life. Through His prophets God let Zerubbabel in on the plan for him. Calling him a signet ring refers to the authority God had given him. God bestowed honor on Zerubbabel who was an heir of King David. God had chosen him, and Ephesians 1:4 says that God has chosen us. Whose heirs are we? How does that effect the authority we have received?

Zechariah 4:9-10a NLT - 9 "Zerubbabel is the one who laid the foundation of this Temple, and he will complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of Heaven's Armies has sent me. 10 Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand." ...

Sometimes we find ourselves starting over again and going back to square one- in our relationships, in our jobs, in our faith. It can be difficult to place that foundational stone knowing the hard work that lies ahead. But Zechariah gives us a new perspective on times such as these. How does God view our small beginnings? What projects do you think God is asking you to pick up the first small stone and begin again?

WRAP-UP

The message of Haggai was a message of admonishment and encouragement. Haggai spoke to a discouraged remnant of God's people who had lost their focus. God was calling their attention back to Himself. He was sovereign and He had a plan for them. Once they turned back to Him and began the work again, God was ready to do some shaking and clear their path. He reminded Zerubbabel, and us, that we are God's chosen, have been given His authority. And that God takes delight in our small beginnings – again, and again and again.

MEMORY VERSE.

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand." ...

- Zechariah 4:10a NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life _____

Challenge.- Courageously being whatever God calls you to this week.

“Courage to Begin Again... Again... Again”

Haggai 4

INTRODUCTION

God has made it clear in His message through the prophet Haggai that He wants His people to refocus on Him, and to begin the work again. The message of Haggai ends with God's declaration of His sovereignty and His plan for the future of His people. God intends good for them and for us, but we need the courage to dust ourselves off after setbacks and begin again. God will fulfill His promises and we must trust and remain faithful.

Ice Breaker

What unfinished projects do you have in your closet or garage that you intend to finish one day?

Key Passage

Haggai 2:23 NLT - 23 "But when this happens, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, I will honor you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant. I will make you like a signet ring on my finger, says the LORD, for I have chosen you. I, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!"

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. God is Sovereign

On the same day that God sent a message to the priests about their sin defiling their work as they undertook rebuilding the temple (Hag 2:10-19), He also sent a message to the governor of Judah about the power struggle they were facing. The remnant of Israelites returned to Jerusalem to face opposition of neighboring nations who were much more powerful than they were.

Haggai 2:21 NLT - 21 "Tell Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, that I am about to shake the heavens and the earth.

John 16:33 NLT - 33 I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

What an encouragement but also a concern it must have been for Zerubbabel to hear that God is in control (Hag 2:21). But that also meant there would be shaking.

We all experience shaking, trials and sorrow in our lives. What kinds of shaking has rocked your world in the past or in the present? We are not immune to the trouble in the world, but Jesus gives us a promise that He has overcome this world. Why did Jesus tell us about the trouble coming our way (Jn 16:33)? How does knowing that Jesus has overcome the world bring you peace amid trials?

Zerubbabel might be governor, and Darius might be King, but God was sovereign.

Haggai 2:22 NLT - 22 I will overthrow royal thrones and destroy the power of foreign kingdoms. I will overturn their chariots and riders. The horses will fall, and their riders will kill each other.

Exodus 15:19 NLT - 19 When Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and charioteers rushed into the sea, the LORD brought the water crashing down on them. But the people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground!

God was in control, and He had a plan in place. In verse 22 Haggai was told what was going to happen.

When God referred to what He would do in the future He also referenced what He had done in the past. The Israelites knew that God had delivered them from slavery in Egypt. This was their heritage.

How do both passages above point to God as the ultimate authority and source of Israel's salvation?

Zechariah 4:6-7 NLT - 6 Then he said to me, "This is what the LORD says to Zerubbabel: It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. 7 Nothing, not even a mighty mountain, will stand in Zerubbabel's way; it will become a level plain before him! And when Zerubbabel sets the final stone of the Temple in place, the people will shout: 'May God bless it! May God bless it!'"

Haggai was not the only prophet God sent to Zerubbabel. Zechariah also delivered God's message to him. When you look at the passage above, how is God delivering the same information that Haggai brought and how is it different?

Ephesians 6:12 NLT - 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

There will always be evil in our world. This week we have seen evidence as war erupted in Europe. While evil people do evil deeds, we should also be aware that there is a spiritual component that underlies such actions (Eph 6:12). We can contend in the spiritual arena through prayer.

God is the one who overthrew Pharaoh's army and the Lord of Heaven's Army promised Zerubbabel that His Spirit would clear the path before His people. Pause for a time of prayer to the Lord of Heaven's Army to intercede for our world and do battle on behalf of the innocent involved in the war in Ukraine.

2. Chosen

Haggai 2:23 NLT - 23 "But when this happens, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, I will honor you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant. I will make you like a signet ring on my finger, says the LORD, for I have chosen you. I, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!"

Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT - 4 Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.