



# COURAGE

## *A STUDY IN HAGGAI*



The book of Haggai is a short book, just two chapters long. In fact, by the time you make it to the end of the Prayer Walk you will have read through it in its entirety! GO YOU!

Before we get started, a bit of context is probably helpful. As you may know, the Israelites had historically waffled back and forth between following God and abandoning their identities as his chosen people. This particular glimpse takes place after the Israelites had been suffering their consequences in exile. A remnant (about 50,000 people) were permitted to return to Jerusalem to rebuild God's holy city, including the splendor of the Temple. However, after some time, this remnant became distracted and even complacent in their mission.

Enter the prophet Haggai to give them a message from God.

*READ THROUGH HAGGAI ON YOUR PHONE*



ON AUGUST 29 OF THE SECOND YEAR OF KING DARIUS'S REIGN, THE LORD GAVE A MESSAGE THROUGH THE PROPHET HAGGAI TO ZERUBBABEL SON OF SHEALTIEL, GOVERNOR OF JUDAH, AND TO JESHUA SON OF JEHOZADAK, THE HIGH PRIEST.

"THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES SAYS: THE PEOPLE ARE SAYING, 'THE TIME HAS NOT YET COME TO REBUILD THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.'"

## HAGGAI 1:1-2

Did you know that your body is a temple? 1 Corinthians 3:16 says, "Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and the Spirit of God lives in you?" It's true. If you've made the decision to follow after God and receive the power of the Holy Spirit, God himself dwells within you! AMAZING! The beauty of this truth is that it's a great paradox. Our house isn't clean and worthy enough for God's presence, yet, because of Jesus' sacrifice cleaning out our souls, God chooses to dwell within us any way.

As you read through Haggai, in addition to a story of rebuilding the actual temple, think of it also as a story of you rebuilding your own temple of your body, mind, and soul. Just as you might prepare your home for guests, think of ways that God might be challenging you to prepare your heart for His presence. Like the Israelites in this verse, you may be thinking, "The time has not yet come." However, THE TIME IS NOW!



### PRAY

Lord, remind me that I am a temple of the Holy Spirit. Remind me that you take great pleasure in residing within me. May my highest aim be to build and rebuild my life in a way that brings honor and glory to your name. Lord, I know that this temple, at times, has laid in ruins. It hasn't always been a place worthy of your presence. Thank you for being with me anyway. Grant me the courage to do the hard work of cleaning house and preparing room for your holiness.

**AMEN!**

# HAGGAI 1:3-11

THEN THE LORD SENT THIS MESSAGE THROUGH THE PROPHET HAGGAI: "WHY ARE YOU LIVING IN LUXURIOUS HOUSES WHILE MY HOUSE LIES IN RUINS? THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES SAYS: LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU! YOU HAVE PLANTED MUCH BUT HARVEST LITTLE. YOU EAT BUT ARE NOT SATISFIED. YOU DRINK BUT ARE STILL THIRSTY. YOU PUT ON CLOTHES BUT CANNOT KEEP WARM. YOUR WAGES DISAPPEAR AS THOUGH YOU WERE PUTTING THEM IN POCKETS FILLED WITH HOLES!



"THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES SAYS: LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU! NOW GO UP INTO THE HILLS, BRING DOWN TIMBER, AND REBUILD MY HOUSE. THEN I WILL TAKE PLEASURE IN IT AND BE HONORED, SAYS THE LORD. YOU HOPED FOR RICH HARVESTS, BUT THEY WERE POOR. AND WHEN YOU BROUGHT YOUR HARVEST HOME, I BLEW IT AWAY. WHY? BECAUSE MY HOUSE LIES IN RUINS, SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES, WHILE ALL OF YOU ARE BUSY BUILDING YOUR OWN FINE HOUSES. IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU THAT THE HEAVENS WITHHOLD THE DEW AND THE EARTH PRODUCES NO CROPS. I HAVE CALLED FOR A DROUGHT ON YOUR FIELDS AND HILLS A DROUGHT TO WITHER THE GRAIN AND GRAPES AND OLIVE TREES AND ALL YOUR OTHER CROPS, A DROUGHT TO STARVE YOU AND YOUR LIVESTOCK AND TO RUIN EVERYTHING YOU HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO GET."

Like the Israelites, we are often tempted to focus our energies on building our own kingdoms. Haggai was calling the people out for living in nice homes with plenty of comforts while "God's house" was neglected. Where have you been placing your time, energy, and resources? Have your priorities been out of whack? We must be careful whose kingdom we are spending our time building. As Haggai warned the Israelites, anything other than the kingdom of God will wither away. Let's be sure we are planting our hearts in soil that is eternal...not the kingdoms of this world, not our own status or accomplishments, but SOLELY in the firm foundation of God's eternal Kingdom!

## PRAY

Lord forgive me for the times my priorities have been ALL wrong. Forgive me for using my resources to build my own kingdom. I acknowledge the fact that your kingdom is the only thing that is eternal and worthy of my investment. Lord, convict me where I have been focused on the wrong things. Give me eyes to see the beauty of your kingdom and grant me an undivided heart toward you.

AMEN.



*THEN ZERUBBABEL SON OF SHEALTIEL, AND JESHUA SON OF JEHOZADAK, THE HIGH PRIEST, AND THE WHOLE REMNANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE BEGAN TO OBEY THE MESSAGE FROM THE LORD THEIR GOD. WHEN THEY HEARD THE WORDS OF THE PROPHET HAGGAI, WHOM THE LORD THEIR GOD HAD SENT, THE PEOPLE FEARED THE LORD. THEN HAGGAI, THE LORD'S MESSENGER, GAVE THE PEOPLE THIS MESSAGE FROM THE LORD: "I AM WITH YOU, SAYS THE LORD!" SO THE LORD SPARKED THE ENTHUSIASM OF ZERUBBABEL SON OF SHEALTIEL, GOVERNOR OF JUDAH, AND THE ENTHUSIASM OF JESHUA SON OF JEHOZADAK, THE HIGH PRIEST, AND THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE WHOLE REMNANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE. THEY BEGAN TO WORK ON THE HOUSE OF THEIR GOD, THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES, ON SEPTEMBER 21 OF THE SECOND YEAR OF KING DARIUS'S REIGN.*

## HAGGAI 1:12-15

Did you see what happened here? God sent a messenger to the Israelites...and they ACTUALLY listened! It's a miracle! What a beautiful picture. They heard the word of the Lord and they obeyed! May I do the same in my life!

So the Lord sparked their enthusiasm in response to their attentive obedience. They were excited about what the temple could be. Let's ask the Lord that he would do the same for us...that he would give us a prophetic imagination for what his kingdom could be here on earth. Not only did the Lord stir up their excitement, he also knit their hearts and minds together to accomplish a singular goal...TOGETHER! Let's spend some time in prayer asking that God would do the same here at New Life!

### PRAY

Lord, spark our enthusiasm! We ask that you would give us eyes to see a vision for our community. Tell us where to build and we will obey. Lord, knit our hearts together that we may all be working toward the same goal... of saying, "On the Central Coast, as it is in Heaven!

**AMEN.**



## HAGGAI 2:1-5

THEN ON OCTOBER 17 OF THAT SAME YEAR, THE LORD SENT ANOTHER MESSAGE THROUGH THE PROPHET HAGGAI. "SAY THIS TO ZERUBBABEL SON OF SHEALTIEL, GOVERNOR OF JUDAH, AND TO JESHUA SON OF JEHOZADAK, THE HIGH PRIEST, AND TO THE REMNANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE THERE IN THE LAND: 'DOES ANYONE REMEMBER THIS HOUSE THIS TEMPLE IN ITS FORMER SPLendor? HOW, IN COMPARISON, DOES IT LOOK TO YOU NOW? IT MUST SEEM LIKE NOTHING AT ALL! BUT NOW THE LORD SAYS: BE STRONG, ZERUBBABEL. BE STRONG, JESHUA SON OF JEHOZADAK, THE HIGH PRIEST. BE STRONG, ALL YOU PEOPLE STILL LEFT IN THE LAND. AND NOW GET TO WORK, FOR I AM WITH YOU, SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES. MY SPIRIT REMAINS AMONG YOU, JUST AS I PROMISED WHEN YOU CAME OUT OF EGYPT. SO DO NOT BE AFRAID.'

Be strong and get to work, for I am with you! These are the words the Lord still says to us as we work to build his kingdom alongside him and each other. About a month after beginning, Haggai encouraged the Israelites to step back and evaluate their work and see that it wasn't up to par with God's glory. But they didn't give up! God assured them that even when things were difficult that they shouldn't be afraid for HE was with them. After all, they were building HIS house...of course he was invested!



### PRAY

Lord, let me hear you tell me to be strong. I need your strength to continue on in this journey. It's not easy to labor for your kingdom. There is always opposition and hardships. Remind me that you are with me always. Help me to not be afraid when things aren't turning out how I thought. Help me to stay strong, get to work, and remember that you are with me!

**AMEN!**

## HAGGAI 2:6-9

*"FOR THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES SAYS: IN JUST A LITTLE WHILE I WILL AGAIN SHAKE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, THE OCEANS AND THE DRY LAND. I WILL SHAKE ALL THE NATIONS, AND THE TREASURES OF ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BROUGHT TO THIS TEMPLE. I WILL FILL THIS PLACE WITH GLORY, SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES. THE SILVER IS MINE, AND THE GOLD IS MINE, SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES. THE FUTURE GLORY OF THIS TEMPLE WILL BE GREATER THAN ITS PAST GLORY, SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES. AND IN THIS PLACE I WILL BRING PEACE. I, THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES, HAVE SPOKEN!"*

In just a little while God will do it again! It had been so long since God's glory had been on full display amongst his people. It had been a hard season of exile, suffering the consequences of their sins and it grieved God's heart that they had chosen things other than him. But hope was on the horizon again! God's temple was being rebuilt and the day was coming soon when the earth would shake and God would be on his rightful place on the throne.


God is worthy of every treasure and gift we could possibly think to give to him. The earth is the Lord's and everything in it! No gift, however grand and splendid, will never come close to being enough.

Spend a few moments marveling at God's holiness and beauty. Allow yourself to stand in awe. When you use your imagination to picture the future glory promised in this passage, let yourself be overcome by your smallness in the presence of God's grandness!

### PRAY

Lord, everything belongs to you. No gift I give you will ever be adequate in comparison to your glory. However, that won't stop me from trying! Give me a vision of your glory. Show me the splendor of your majesty. I want to see your glory. Do it again Lord! Fill the earth with your power. May your might and your goodness be evident and may we dwell in your presence in the house of the Lord, forever!

**AMEN.**



ON DECEMBER 18 OF THE SECOND YEAR OF KING DARIUS'S REIGN, THE LORD SENT THIS MESSAGE TO THE PROPHET HAGGAI: "THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES SAYS. ASK THE PRIESTS THIS QUESTION ABOUT THE LAW: 'IF ONE OF YOU IS CARRYING SOME MEAT FROM A HOLY SACRIFICE IN HIS ROBES AND HIS ROBE HAPPENS TO BRUSH AGAINST SOME BREAD OR STEW, WINE OR OLIVE OIL, OR ANY OTHER KIND OF FOOD, WILL IT ALSO BECOME HOLY?'"

THE PRIESTS REPLIED, "NO."

THEN HAGGAI ASKED, "IF SOMEONE BECOMES CEREMONIALLY UNCLEAN BY TOUCHING A DEAD PERSON AND THEN TOUCHES ANY OF THESE FOODS, WILL THE FOOD BE DEFILED?"

AND THE PRIESTS ANSWERED, "YES."

THEN HAGGAI RESPONDED, "THAT IS HOW IT IS WITH THIS PEOPLE AND THIS NATION, SAYS THE LORD. EVERYTHING THEY DO AND EVERYTHING THEY OFFER IS DEFILED BY THEIR SIN. LOOK AT WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO YOU BEFORE YOU BEGAN TO LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE LORD'S TEMPLE. WHEN YOU HOPED FOR A TWENTY-BUSHEL CROP, YOU HARVESTED ONLY TEN. WHEN YOU EXPECTED TO DRAW FIFTY GALLONS FROM THE WINEPRESS, YOU FOUND ONLY TWENTY. I SENT BLIGHT AND MILDEW AND HAIL TO DESTROY EVERYTHING YOU WORKED SO HARD TO PRODUCE. EVEN SO, YOU REFUSED TO RETURN TO ME, SAYS THE LORD.

## HAGGAI 2:10-17

Our choices matter. What we do, not only affects our life, but it affects the lives of others and it affects the holiness of God's house. Let us not be deceived that what we do in secret won't have consequences. God is calling the Israelites (and us as well) to live in the light...to keep ourselves and God's house holy...set apart for Kingdom purposes. Let's not forget that sin gives way to death and destruction. Sin will ruin our lives. Let's not mess around with fire. If we are going to be about building God's kingdom, we need to continually work on living lives worthy of that calling. Not in a legalistic, rule following way...but in a way that acknowledges the power of our actions and strives to keep our hearts undivided.

## PRAY

Lord, bind my wandering heart to thee. Cleanse me from the impurities that can get in the way of my building of your kingdom. When I fall short and suffer the consequences, grant me the courage to keep moving forward. Don't allow sin to have the final say over my life and my mission.

## AMEN.

## HAGGAI 2:18-23

"THINK ABOUT THIS EIGHTEENTH DAY OF DECEMBER, THE DAY WHEN THE FOUNDATION OF THE LORD'S TEMPLE WAS LAID. THINK CAREFULLY. I AM GIVING YOU A PROMISE NOW WHILE THE SEED IS STILL IN THE BARN. YOU HAVE NOT YET HARVESTED YOUR GRAIN, AND YOUR GRAPEVINES, FIG TREES, POMEGRANATES, AND OLIVE TREES HAVE NOT YET PRODUCED THEIR CROPS. BUT FROM THIS DAY ONWARD I WILL BLESS YOU."

ON THAT SAME DAY, DECEMBER 18, THE LORD SENT THIS SECOND MESSAGE TO HAGGAI: "TELL ZERUBBABEL, THE GOVERNOR OF JUDAH, THAT I AM ABOUT TO SHAKE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. 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.

"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!"

Think carefully. I am giving you a promise TODAY...while the seed is STILL in the barn. The Israelites had endured a long season of disappointment and unmet expectations. However, God was giving them a promise. Things were about to turn around. The seed hadn't been planted or even left the barn yet and they could still trust that God was going to deliver them a harvest. Maybe you've also been in a season of disappointment after disappointment. Let God speak to your heart. Allow yourself to trust in the promise of new beginnings. Trust that your best days are ahead of you. If the Lord has spoken, so it will come to be!



### PRAY

Lord, I trust in your promises. I've barely moved. The seed is still waiting in the barn...and yet I'm trusting that you will pour out your blessings on my efforts and allow me to reap a harvest at the right time. I've endured many disappointments and at times questioned where you are in my troubles. Help me to trust. I believe, but help me with my unbelief.

**AMEN!**