

## Consider Your Ways – Challenges That Lead to Life Changes

Part of the "minor prophets", the book of Haggai is an often overlooked, seldom studied book of the Old Testament. Although it is short (only 2 chapters) the book has much to teach us. Set in the same time period of Zechariah, the theme of Haggai is the unfinished temple, and his mission to admonish and encourage the builders.



Even though this book was written some 2500 years ago, it is very applicable for today in that the story holds modern day significance as a lesson about the consequences of disobedience and blessings of obedience. Haggai says, "Consider your ways." Today, we need to consider our ways.

### Consider Your Ways

Haggai 1:6 articulates the dissatisfaction of the builders: "Ye have sown much, and bring in little: ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but are not filled with drink; ye clothe you but there is none warm; and he that earns wages earns wages to put into a bag with holes." What is Haggai saying here?

**Consider your position.** You are restless. Nothing is ever enough. Nothing satisfies. Something is always missing. We need to evaluate our lives and see if we are guilty of these things. Am I dissatisfied with my life? Do I buy lotto tickets thinking that winning the lotto would solve all my problems? Do I wish for a better paying job? Do I wish I lived in a bigger and nicer house? Do I wish I had a new car? Claim your position in life for God. Claim one person by name for Him. Claim "a people" for him. Stop focusing on

**Consider your priorities.** In verse 9 God was beginning to bring down curses upon them. Their crops died in the field. Their animals became sick. Why is He doing this to them? Because they neglected the temple, and left it in ruins while they eagerly employed themselves in building and decorating their own houses; therefore they were visited by drought and famine, and by various diseases on man and beast. The old rules about blessing and cursing are still in effect, and since they had their priorities all wrong, they were trying to find happiness in things and God was not going to let them. Get your priorities straight: is your house getting all the attention while God's house is

falling apart? What are you doing to decorate your heavenly home? Life is spinning – God is increasingly being pushed to the edge when He should be the center of your life – not things.

**Consider your purpose.** After they got their priorities straight and resumed the work of God, Haggai continued to preach to the builders. Getting back to work was one thing, but he wanted to make sure that they were doing the work with the right motives. Motivation is everything. Haggai knew God wanted them to build the temple for the right reason – to His glory – not to appease God, or set any records or create something out of pride. They might have been building the temple for themselves and their own glory and not for God. Your purpose in life is to glorify the God who created you. Are you living a life that points to your accomplishments and possessions...or to God?

### **Obedience Brings Blessing**

In Chapter 2 Haggai sees evidence of genuine repentance and turning to the Lord, in light of which there is the prospect of great hope for the days ahead. The people could take comfort in the promise of the Lord's renewed blessing and the attendant reversal of conditions of economic hardship. Once again the Lord would work on their behalf. The final words of v. 19 are these: "From this day on I will bless you."

Disobedience to God caused God's blessings to be withheld. But renewed obedience released God's blessing. Count on God's faithfulness to His promise as you live for Him. God says He will remember the day you change from your ways, to God.

#### **Haggai**

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