

Haggai: Reaping the reward of repentance

Introduction

Main Idea: The people of Israel heard the word of the Lord, repented together, and obeyed God. As they obeyed God, He affirmed His presence among them.

Sticky Statement: When we listen to God about ourselves then repent and obey, He will reaffirm His presence to us.

Questions to ask..

- How do you give evidence in your daily life that you believe God's word to be powerful?
- Are you a regular repenter? If not, is it possibly due to your lack of time in God's Word?
- In what ways does your life and worship reflect "the fear of the Lord"?

Review from the previous week.

Haggai 1:12-15 (12) Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the entire remnant of the people obeyed the LORD their God and the words of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. So the people feared the LORD. **(13)** Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, delivered the LORD's message to the people: "I am with you—this is the LORD's declaration." **(14)** The LORD roused the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, the spirit of the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. They began work on the house of the LORD of Armies, their God, **(15)** on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.

Message

- I. God's Word led to Repentance (1:12).
 - A. God's word brings forth obedience (1:12a).
 1. God's word is powerful and effective
Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
 2. God' often chooses to deliver His words through a spokesman

- a. The people listened to God but also Haggai
 - b. Haggai was a prophet, delivering God's words, under God's power and with God's authority
 - c. Today, you would equate Haggai with a preacher. God's spokesman to people.
 - d. Romans 10:14(14) How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher? (15) And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.
3. The power of leadership in respect to repentance
- a. The king modeled repentance
 - b. The high priest modeled repentance
 - c. The people followed suit and repented

B. God's word brings forth fear of the Lord (1:12b).

1. The word fear does not have an exact equivalent in the English language
- a. Conveys ideas about fear neither of which convey terror but combined provide a picture of affection and worship driven by an acute awareness of God's character
 - b. Conveys a sense of submission to the authority of God in response to God's character.
 - i. Intimate awareness of who God is.
 - Aware of his holiness
 - Awesome power
 - ii. Compelled to bow in obedience and submission. Isaiah 6:5
 - c. Awareness of God should drive us to our knees in confession and humility compelling us to obey
2. It communicates a sense of awe because of God's power and might
- a. They became more distinctly aware of God's might
 - b. Psalms 61:1-4 (1) God, hear my cry; pay attention to my prayer. (2) I call to you from the ends of the earth when my heart is without strength. Lead me to a rock that is high above me, (3) for you have been a refuge for me, a strong tower in the face of the enemy. (4) I will dwell in your tent forever and take refuge under the shelter of your wings. Selah

- c. The idea that God is majestic, powerful, and able to save is a key element to rightly understanding who God is and to rightly worshiping Him
3. So, as we walk in disobedience, and as we find ourselves confronted with God's Word, our response should be grounded in a fear of God. Not necessarily an abject terror, but instead affection, worship, and trust, rooted in the person and character of God.

C. Illustration: Foul Mouthed Parrot

A young man named John received a parrot as a gift. The parrot had a bad attitude and an even worse vocabulary. Every word out of the bird's mouth was rude, obnoxious and laced with profanity.

John tried and tried to change the bird's attitude by consistently saying only polite words, playing soft music and anything else he could think of to "clean up" the bird's vocabulary.

Finally, John was fed up and he yelled at the parrot. The parrot yelled back. John shook the parrot and the parrot got angrier and even ruder.

John, in desperation, threw up his hands, grabbed the bird and put him in the freezer. For a few minutes the parrot squawked and kicked and screamed. Then suddenly there was total quiet. Not a peep was heard for over a minute. Fearing that he'd hurt the parrot, John quickly opened the door to the freezer.

The parrot calmly stepped out onto John's outstretched arms and said "I believe I may have offended you with my rude language and actions. I'm sincerely remorseful for my inappropriate transgressions and I fully intend to do everything I can to correct my rude and unforgivable behavior."

John was stunned at the change in the bird's attitude. As he was about to ask the parrot what had made such a dramatic change in his behavior, the bird continued, "May I ask what the turkey did?"

- #### D. Application: Repenting means to make a u-turn. To do the opposite of what you have been doing. It is not just saying I am sorry. It is saying I am sorry and then changing your mind so that you don't continually make the same decision. God's word as we take it in daily works in us to change us.

- II. The Repentance of the People Led to the Restoration of the Temple (1:13-15).
 - A. The messenger of the Lord delivered the message of the Lord (1:13).
 - 1. Messenger
 - a. The root word for messenger is the same as message
 - b. Haggai seems to be pointing out how significant of the role the messenger plays in giving the message. They are linked together.
 - c. The messenger is not God himself but is speaking for God.
 - d. Is translated in other places as angel, envoy, or ambassador.
 - e. No authority or truth in themselves but should be listened to and honored because they convey the message, not their own but from God.
 - 2. Delivered
 - a. Means to hand over.
 - b. Stewards of God's message.
 - B. The Lord promises His presence to His people to stir them to obedience (1:13).
 - 1. It is a promise of comfort
 - a. Still aware of their recent captivity in Babylon and return to Jerusalem
 - b. It would have been easy for them to forget God was still with them. God had forgotten them.
 - c. He didn't, and it is a theme you will see all across scripture.
 - d. We must assume that it will not be any different for us.
 - e. We might at times feel abandoned but we are not.
 - f. Remember Jesus name given by God, Immanuel, It means God with Us.
 - 2. It is a promise of blessing
 - a. Remember in vs.11 where the people were losing everything. Their crops, their food. Nothing was working out right for them.
 - b. It is a reminder that they will succeed and persevere.
 - c. Christians are able to persevere in a way that the rest of the world can't for two reasons
 - i. We have the promise and hope of the resurrection
 - ii. Christ will conquer and reign eternally
 - 3. They were recipients of God's grace

- a. The response of God to their repentance is a foreshadowing of God's response to our repentance today.
 - b. It is a reminding of God's consistent and unfailing love in the face of our own disobedience.

- C. The Lord stirs the spirits of the leaders and the people to encourage them and equip them to obey (1:14).
 - 1. Leadership leads as God enables them
 - a. Leadership is unable to lead rightly unless God enables them by supplying His power.
 - b. Acknowledgment of our weakness and need is a necessary component to faithful and successful spiritual leadership.
 - c. As leadership moves in the spirit of God so do the people.
 - 2. Everything is theological
 - a. The problem was their lack of progress on the building project.
 - b. The answer is not viewed as a primarily physical problem but a spiritual problem.
 - c. Lack of physical obedience was a direct result of their unwilling and disobedient hearts.
 - d. All physical acts both good and bad initiate in the heart.
 - e. Therefore, every behavior is ultimately a spiritual issue.
 - f. That means that every behavior is rooted in some sort of theological position.

- D. Illustration: Jaxon not liking shower or soap. I had to give Jaxon a shower this morning and said come on let's go. I don't like showers. Come on you need to wash with soap. I don't like soap. I said soap is your friend. It gets you clean. He proceeds like he normally will and go in and take a shower. Once he is in there he will stay for as long as you let him getting watered down and playing in the water.

- E. Application: When we repent there is a change of heart. As a result of this change of heart, there is a change in action. We become obedient to God. We stop saying no to God with our actions and start saying Yes to God. Not because we are sorry, although that is a part of it. Because we have had a change in our attitude towards God and in our desire and will to please him.

Conclusion