

HAGGAI

Text: Ezra 4:1-6 / Haggai 2:1-9
Subject: “Victorious Through Every Frustration”

- Question:** Have you ever been dented in your spirit?
Question: Have you ever experienced deep disappointment?
Question: Have you ever wondered how God would “come through”?
Question: Have you ever felt “on hold”, “delayed” or “detoured”?
Question: Have you ever needed a “Word from the Lord”?

(If So, Then Haggai Is For You) Haggai And Ezra Have An Awesome Backdrop

- In 605 B.C. - The first Jewish exiles were deported to Babylon.
In 597 B.C. - The second deportation to Babylon took place.
In 586 B.C. - Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the third deportation to Babylon occurred.
In 539 B.C. - Cyrus (King of Persia) conquers Babylon.
In 538 B.C. - Cyrus issues a decree to the Jewish exiles.
In 537 B.C. - 50,000 Jews return home to Jerusalem.
In 536 B.C. - The temple foundation is laid.
In 536 B.C. - The progress is interrupted because of opposition.
In 520 B.C. - The work resumes again under the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah (after a 16 year delay).
In 515 B.C. - The temple restoration is completed.
In 458 B.C. - Ezra arrives in Jerusalem.
In 444 B.C. - Nehemiah arrives, rebuilds the walls and the city gates and a great Bible Conference soon follows.

The Simple Picture Is This:

- #1. 70 years of captivity are over for God's people!
- #2. God's people return home to rebuild the city, restore the temple and renew the altar!
- #3. It wouldn't be easy to start all over again!
- #4. They wouldn't be free from rejection, opposition and frustration!
- #5. This would be a time for God to prove Himself once again!

- Question:** How many of you know that God always completes what God begins?
Question: How many of you know that God can even use a worldly Nebuchadnezzar (who chastened the people of Judah) for God's own purpose?
Question: How many of you know that it was God who raised up Cyrus to defeat the Babylonians, establish the Persian empire and free the Jews to rebuild their city of Jerusalem?
Question: How many of you know that God is seldom early (but He is never late)?

(What's The “Big Deal” About Overcoming Every Frustration?)

◆ **The “Big Deal” is that the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple meant three things:**

- #1. The restoring of pure worship back in Jerusalem.
- #2. The witness (or testimony) to the unbelieving nations who were watching the saints in Jerusalem.
- #3. The revival that God was about to bring was being prepared for.

(Discover 3 things about God's revival and your frustrations that speak to every heart today)
(Pg. 1 of 5)

I. The Frustrations From The Enemy

Fact: In Ezra 1:3, the question is asked, “Who will go and build the house of God”?

Fact: In Ezra 2:1, many say “Yes” and return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city.

Fact: In Ezra 3:12, the people shout and weep for joy as the temple foundations are laid.

Fact: In Ezra 4, the enemy comes in like a flood to stop the work of God:

(Why?)

- ◆ Because the devil hates the progress of Christ’s church
- ◆ Because the devil hates the purpose of Christ’s church.
- ◆ Because the devil hates the fruit and reward of ministry that touches the lives of people.

(3 Enemy Schemes To Frustrate God’s Work Through You)

Frustration #1: Temptation To Compromise Your Convictions (Ezra 4:1-3)

The Subtlety: “Let us build with you” (4:2)

The Response: “Ye have nothing to do with us in building” (4:3)

Fact: This first enemy attack was very subtle.

Fact: The Samaritans (the former Northern Kingdom) offered to work with the Jews in rebuilding.

Fact: These Samaritans were a mixture of many races and didn’t worship the true God:
“...They feared the Lord, yet served their own gods” (2 Kings 17:33)

Fact: Their sole purpose in offering help would be used of the enemy to join, co-mingle, corrupt and defeat God’s people (as they would inter-marry with the heathen.

Question: Are we willing to separate from the influences that would hinder us?

Question: Is there any compromise in our walk that is impeding God’s growth in us?

Question: Is there any subtle working of the enemy to weaken us in battle?

Question: Any weeds in our garden that need to be pulled?

Frustration #2: Intimidation To Fear Your Critics (vs. 4-6)

“The people weakened the hands of the people of Judah and troubled them in building”. (v. 4)

“And hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose”. (v. 5)

“And wrote accusation against the people” (v. 6)

Fact: The enemy attempted to intimidate God’s people.

Fact: The enemy raised up a following to frustrate the workers.

Fact: De-motivators can dent your spirit – watch out!

(But Remember:)

- ◆ If you fear man, you cannot fear God, (but)
- ◆ If you fear God, you will not fear man!!!

Question: Has the enemy been whispering to you?

Question: Has your confidence been shaken by snipers waiting for your fall?

Question: Are you struggling to practice the principle of “**delayed response**”?

(This Still Works)

“The Lord shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace”. (Exodus 14:14)

“The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression”.
(Proverbs 19:11)

“He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made”. (Psalm 7:15)

Frustration #3: Legislation To Suppress Your Vision

Fact: The enemy caused a special law to be passed to order the Jews to stop rebuilding Jerusalem.

“Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, that this city be not builded” (Ezra 4:21)

Fact: Rehum dictated a letter to Shimshai.

Fact: Shimshai sent the letter to the king.

Fact: The king ordered the project to be stopped.

◆ And for 16 years (536 B.C. – 520 B.C.) the work of God was put “On Hold”

“Then ceased the work of the house of God at Jerusalem” (V. 24)

Question: Have you encountered any obstacles lately?

Question: Have you been delayed or detoured in your vision?

Question: Has the enemy attempted to sour your spirit?

Question: Has infection touched you like it did the Jews?

(Beware Of These:)

II. The Feelings Of The People (How can frustration affect us?)

#1. “Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?” (Haggai 2:3)

#2. “And, how do you see it now?” (v. 3)

#3. “Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?” (v. 3)

Consider Their Feelings:

- ◆ The temple was in ruins (as was the city).
- ◆ The recovery of the 70 year captivity was slow and painful.
- ◆ The people were remembering the “way it used to be”.
- ◆ The times were hard and the leaders were discouraged.

(And The People Question)

- ◆ “Is it really worth it to rebuild all over again?”
- ◆ “Will God do again what He had done before?”

(Ever Ask Yourself These Questions?)

- ◆ “Lord, how will you change my heart from discouragement to determination?”
- ◆ “Lord, how will you bring revival after so long a delay?”
- ◆ “Lord, how will you show yourself strong in this low point in the church’s history?”
- ◆ “Lord, how will you complete what you started to do in this city?”

(Divine Intervention)

“Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem”. (Ezra 5:1)

(What Did God Say Through Haggai?)

III. The Faithfulness Of God

“In the seventh month, on day 21, there came a word of the Lord”. (Haggai 2:1)

Fact: It’s a word from God (not Haggai)!

Fact: It’s a word that’s alive and fresh today!

Question: What was God’s message that led to a dramatic change?

Question: What was the word that prompted the renewal and completion of the rebuilding?

(4 Guarantees To Your Heart) From Haggai 2

#1. The “Presence” of God (Vs. 4,5)

“Be strong... for I am with you saith the Lord”. (v. 4)

“My Spirit remains among you (from Egypt). (v. 5)

Fact: Haggai didn’t deny that times were hard!

Fact: Haggai didn’t confess that all was well!

Fact: Haggai didn’t hide the fact that the people had quit for 16 years!

(Instead He Says “Be Strong”) How Can We?

“For I am with thee saith the Lord”

1. The presence of God is our greatest confidence and joy.
2. The presence of God is our greatest assurance and peace.
3. The presence of God is our greatest comfort in battle.

Question: Do you know that God is with you today?

#2. The “Promise” of God (v. 7)

“I will fill this house with glory saith the Lord”

Fact: Haggai is looking ahead to Jesus coming.

Fact: And this glory can be seen in your church now.

- ◆ The glory of His mighty power!
- ◆ The glory of His answers to prayer!
- ◆ The glory of His victory in your battle!

#3. The “Provision” of God (v. 8)

“The silver is mine, and the gold is mine saith the Lord”

Fact: The economy was bad!

Fact: The resources were low!

(Pg. 4 of 5)

Question: How would the temple ever be rebuilt?

- ◆ God caused the Persian empire to pay the expenses for rearing the massive walls.
- ◆ God even caused a decree so that the adversaries of the Jews had to furnish the priests with the rams and bullocks to offer sacrifices to God.

(In Other Words)

1. God will provide from unseen sources!
2. God will provide from unplanned means!
3. God will provide exactly what you need!

#4. The “Power” of God (vs. 9-23)

“So is every work of their hands; that which they offer there is unclean”. (v. 14)

Fact: Not only were God’s people back to work (but God’s work must come from a heart that is pure and devoted).

Fact: God is after a pure and undivided heart:

...”Yet ye turned not to me saith the Lord” (v. 17)

Holiness Questions:

“If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy?” (v. 12)

“If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean?” (v. 13)

(What’s Haggai Saying?)

- ◆ That it’s not only important that we do God’s work, but is equally important that we do God’s work from a pure heart!

(And The Good News Is In Verse 22)

“I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms”

“I will destroy the strength of the heathen”

“I will overthrow the chariots”

(In Other Words)

1. God will “**overthrow**” everything that opposes His work in us.
2. God will **deliver us** from every sin that contaminates His nature in us.
3. God will **free us** from every defilement that opposes His Holiness in our lives.
4. God will **purify, sanctify** and **cleanse** us from every besetting sin.

Conclusion

“And the Jews builded, prospered and finished the work...and kept the dedication of God’s house with joy” (Ezra 6:14,16)

Fact: God overcame every frustration and hurdle!

Fact: God made His people joyful once again!

Fact: God revived what was detoured and delayed!

Fact: God completed what He had started!

- ◆ **He did it then! (and)**
- ◆ **He’ll do it now!**

AMEN!

Bill Kirk, Pastor

(Pg. 5 of 5)