
Sermon Notes

February 28, 2016

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Future Glory

Haggai 2:1-9

¹ "In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet,

² "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say,

³ 'Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?

⁴ Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts,

⁵ according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not.

⁶ For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land.

⁷ And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts.

⁸ The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts.

⁹ The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts."

Glory Days

- ❖ Sometimes people, organizations, and nations look back & identify certain years or time periods as their "glory days"
 - those bygone days seem so much more appealing and attractive than what we experience in the present
 - the "good ol' days"
- ❖ The same is true of the church
 - compare the church of our day to the church in *Acts*
 - compare the church of our day with the church at the time of the Protestant Reformation
 - where is that gospel power today?
 - where is that kind of spiritual fervor today?
 - have the best chapters of our congregation's history already been written?

Get Real!

- ❖ Haggai confronts God's people with a realistic appraisal of the past (2:1-5) and then challenges them to grab hold of some amazing promises about the future (2:6-9)
- ❖ A "mixed bag" of emotions at the time of the Temple's "groundbreaking"
 - great joy and celebration
 - tears of sorrow and despair

- ❖ The people realize that their new temple will never come close to being as magnificent and as beautiful as that earlier temple built by Solomon

Get Over it and Get On With It!

- ❖ Haggai insists that people be realistic so that they will not slip back into inertia because of doubt, discouragement, despair, depression, or hopelessness
- ❖ Importance of confronting the truth head-on, accepting it, getting over it and getting on with it
- ❖ Haggai offers words of encouragement so the people will adopt a positive mindset and joyfully see their project through to completion

■ *be strong*

■ why? *because I am with you*

- familiar and repeated words in Scripture
- spoken to Moses, Joshua, the disciples
- David's words to Solomon about building the 1st temple (1 Chronicles 28:20)

- ❖ This rationale for being strong is quite different from the advice our world of today offers us

■ you can do it!

■ you've got it all inside you

- ❖ *Work, for I am with you... My Spirit remains in your midst... Fear not!!!*

Future Glory

- ❖ Though the present looks bleak when compared with the past, the present is leading to a future that will eclipse anything that took place at the earlier temple
 - in the future, God will inaugurate a new era in how He deals with His people (Hebrews 12:26-29)
 - this new era will be marked not by the physical glory of a building, but by the spiritual glory that results from the way God gathers and unites His people from every nation, tribe and tongue into His living temple, the body of Christ (*I will build my church!*)
- ❖ Though the structure of the new temple may not "hold a candle" to the old temple, the work God will do there will be more significant and glorious than anything He has ever done before

Personal Application

1. Do you have a time in your life that you look back at as your "glory days"? Does thinking about your "glory days" tend to diminish your expectations about your future?
2. How can being realistic about the present liberate you to embrace the potential and the possibilities of the future?
3. Is it easy or difficult for you to confront the truth head-on, accept it, get over it and get on with it? How does God's promise to be with you help you in this process?
4. Do you place too much emphasis on outward material aspects of living and worship, and not enough on what really matters? cf. Prov. 23:5; Mt. 6:19–21; Lk. 12:21; 1 Tim. 6:9–10; Heb. 13:5; Jas. 5:1–3 as you think about this.