



An Open Letter to the Weary

Sometimes when I am very weary, I succumb to the tyranny of the urgent. I do what I have to do, or what's expected of me, or what I've committed to, but I have no mental, emotional or physical energy for anything else. And because Jesus is invisible, gracious and understanding, I allow Him to be slowly eased to a secondary place in my life. I sleep through my prayer time, I turn down new opportunities for service, I become lethargic about the Kingdom of God. I am in survival mode. Or so I think. Which is why Haggai's message is for me . . . and for you, too, if from time to time, you find you tend to lose your passion for spiritual things.

Read Haggai 1:1-2:23

I. REORDER YOUR PRIORITIES Haggai 1

- According to 1:1-6, what excuses did the people have for not rebuilding the temple? Give the phrases, then rewrite them in your own words.
- What could the “temple” symbolize today? See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19; Acts 11:26, 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:15.
- What priority are we to give the things of God, according to: Matthew 6:33? 8:18-22? 22:34-38?
- What excuses do people give today for not making their relationship with God a priority?
- What rebuke did God give the people in Haggai 1:5-6? 1:7-11? Rewrite His rebuke in your own words.
- What similar rebukes did God give others in 1 Samuel 2:29-30? Malachi 1:6-11? Matthew 6:19-21? Luke 12:16-21? Mark 8:34-37?
- How many times does the phrase “Give careful thought” appear in the book of Haggai? Give verses.
- Give careful thought to your ways now. Reflect on how you spend the majority of your money and your time; what preoccupies your thoughts; what your primary goals in life are; who your closest friends are.
- Could your weariness be due to misplaced priorities -- trying to accomplish goals that are not His? What will you do to reorder your private world so that God and His agenda are first in your life?

II. REFOCUS YOUR PERSPECTIVE Haggai 2:1-9

A. Close the Door on the Past 2:1-3

- Reading Haggai 2:1-3 with Ezra 3:10-13, on what were many of the older people focused? Describe this in your own words, then apply it to your life.
- What painful comparison is robbing you of joy? What from your past is overshadowing the present?
- How do the following verses encourage you? Isaiah 43:18; Ecclesiastes 3:15; Philippians 3:13-14.
- Re-write Matthew 6:22-23, substituting the word focus for eye. Explain what these verses mean in terms of our perspective.
- Matthew 6:24 describes someone who is “cross-eyed.” In order to correct our vision, what should be our single-eyed focus? 1 Corinthians 7:35; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Hebrews 12:2-3.
- What is one practical way we can close the door on the past, reject painful comparisons, and refocus our perspective? See Nehemiah 1:1-11 and Daniel 9:1-4.
- According to Psalm 27, what are several things we can do to keep our focus? Give phrases with verses.
- How will you incorporate these things into your life?

B. Commit Yourself at the Present 2:4-5

- What command did God give three times in v. 4? Give the modern equivalent of each group to whom the command was given.
- What other command did He also give in v. 4?
- What work has God given you to do?
- What kind of strength is needed to overcome weariness in order to get back to work and complete the assignment?
- What two promises did God give to encourage the weary workers?
- What similar encouragement do you receive from the following verses: Joshua 1:6-9? 1 Chronicles 28:9-10, 20? Isaiah 40:27-31? Isaiah 50:4? Jeremiah 31:25? Matthew 11:28? Galatians 6:9?

C. Open Your Eyes to Him

- What did God say to those who were so focused on the past that they were blinded to the future? See Haggai 2:9.
- In what specific way was the rebuilt temple more glorious than the original temple? See Malachi 3:1 with Matthew 21:12-14.
- How can your “temple” be more glorious tomorrow than it is today, according to Ephesians 5:18? 2 Corinthians 3:18? 1 Peter 1:6-7? 1 John 3:2?
- What is the ultimate glory that is our hope for the future? Ephesians 1:18-21; John 17:24; Revelation 5:11-13, 15:1-4, 19:5-9.

III. REDIRECT YOUR PURPOSE Haggai 2:10-19

- From 2:10-12 give phrases that indicate righteousness is not contagious.
- From the following verses, what can we do to intentionally impart righteousness to others? Genesis 6:8-9, 15:6; Psalm 35:28; Philippians 3:9 with Romans 1:17 and 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:16.
- From 2:13-14 give phrases that indicate sin is contagious. What can you do to stop sin from spreading . . . in your life? in your family? in your neighborhood, city, and country? in the world?
- From 2:15-19, how had God dealt with Judah's sin?
- How are these principles underscored by Deuteronomy 28:1-8 and 28:15-25?
- Apply these principles to your life . . . and to your nation. How have you experienced the consequences of righteousness? of sin?
- How are these consequences motivating factors that help us overcome weariness and put God first?
- Give the phrase in 2:10-23 that reveals God is the God of second chances.
- If your life is marred by sin and its consequences, how do you get a second chance from God? Jeremiah 3:21-22; Acts 2:22-24, 36-38.
- How is this confirmed by Peter's experience in Mark 14:66-72 and John 21:7-8, 15-22?
- Would you thank God for giving you another chance by taking it? Redirect your life's purpose to live for His glory alone.

IV. RECLAIM YOUR PRIVILEGE Haggai 2:20-23

- What promise did God give to Zerubbabel in v. 20-22?
- What similar promise does He give to you and me? Psalm 27:1-3; Proverbs 16:7; Isaiah 57:14-15.
- What privileges did He give Zerubbabel in v. 23?
- What similar privileges does He give to you and me? John 15:14-16; Romans 8:14-17; 1 John 3:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:4.

"So the...Jews continued to build and prosper under the preaching of Haggai the prophet . . . They finished building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel...The temple was completed." --Ezra 6:14-15

"Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." --1 Corinthians 15:58