

Mini Study – Haggai (part 3 of 3)

Abundant Grace

Is holiness contagious? Can we ‘catch it’ through contact with holy things? Such questions may seem odd to us as believers today. Yet these are the types of questions the LORD directs the prophet Haggai to ask - to expose a specific sin infecting the community of God’s people in his day, who were placing their confidence in rebuilding the temple, and association with holy things, to be clean and acceptable in God’s sight.

However, before we get too smug – are we not guilty of the same thing? Placing our trust at times in what we do as the basis of our acceptance with God. The word of the LORD through Haggai calls us to examine our hearts too, and as we shall see, it is a wonderful reminder of the amazing grace of God to us through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

OBSERVE

READ Haggai 2:10-14 (Scripture text at back of study) and:

- underline every reference to *holy*.
- circle every reference to *unclean*.

DISCUSS

2:10 – When did Haggai declare his *third word* from the Lord?

2:11 – What are the priests asked about?

READ Leviticus 6:25-27:

6:27 – What happened to a garment that touched holy meat?

2:12 – What did not happen to stew, wine, oil, or any kind of food that the garment then touched?

2:13 – What did happen when an unclean person touched any of these things?

2:14 – Who did the LORD declare as unclean before Him?

What was the result of this for *every work* of their hands and what they *offered* to the LORD?

CONTAGIOUS

What is the truth being conveyed in these verses? In short, that holiness is not contagious, but uncleanness is. The sin in our heart defiling everything we think, say, or do (Isaiah 64:6). The cleansing and acceptance before God not 'caught' through external religious observance nor through service for the LORD, but a gift of God's grace to be received through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Romans 3:21-26).

OBSERVE

READ Haggai 2:15-19 and:

- underline every reference to *consider*.
- circle the phrase *this day*.

DISCUSS

2:15b-17 – What did the LORD call His people to *look back* upon and *consider*?

FURTHER READING – for more on the curses for disobedience and result of turning away from the LORD - see Deuteronomy 28:15-19 and Amos 4:6-13.

2:18 – What is *the day* being referred to?

2:19 - What did the LORD call them to *consider* from *that day* onward?

AMAZING GRACE

The seed for the upcoming harvest had been planted when Haggai delivered his final two messages. Yet, although there was no seed yet in the barn and food security was low, from that day on the LORD promised to bless His people. A blessing they did not deserve – an unclean people whose every work was defiled. Their past testifying to that fact. The LORD's promise to bless a humbling reminder to them and to us that every blessing we receive from Him is all because of His grace. The LORD who by His grace stirs up our hearts to turn to Him, to know His acceptance and forgiveness, and who by that same grace continues to equip us with every good thing for doing His will and to work in us what is pleasing in His sight.

OBSERVE

READ Haggai 2:20-23 and:

- underline every reference to the *LORD* (including pronouns).
- circle every reference to *Zerubbabel* (including pronouns).

DISCUSS

2:20-21ab – What did Haggai declare a second time on *that day*? To whom?

2:21c – What is the LORD about to do?

2:22 – Why will the LORD do so?

2:23 – What will also happen on that day? Why?

SIGNET RING

READ Jeremiah 22:24-25,30:

22:24 – What picture are we given of the LORD's rejection of Coniah as king?

22:30 – What did the LORD say about Coniah's offspring?

READ Matthew 1:1-2,11-12,16:

1:12 – Who was Jechoniah [Coniah] grandfather of?

What did the LORD's promise to Zerubbabel in Haggai 2:23 then mean for the royal line of David?

1:16 – Who is the King, in the line of David, who will fully and finally establish God's Kingdom on the earth?

REFLECT

Jesus – the promised King in the line of David born into the world to save us. The true temple of the LORD through whom we can now draw near to God. The chosen Servant of the LORD who did not come to be served but to serve by giving His life as a ransom for many. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, now reigning at the Father's right hand, who will one day return and establish His Kingdom fully and finally on the earth. But who until that day calls us to serve Him, and to live as those who have received a Kingdom that cannot be shaken through lives of reverence and obedience to Him. To Him be all the glory both now and forevermore. Amen.

RESPOND

Here are just a few questions to help you further reflect and respond to the truth of God's Word you have discovered through this study:

- Who or what are you trusting in to be acceptable in God's sight?
- Give thanks to the Father that by His grace we have come to know His acceptance and forgiveness through faith in Jesus.

(1) Haggai 2:10-14

¹⁰On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, ¹¹“Thus says the Lord of hosts: Ask the priests about the law: ¹²‘If someone carries holy meat in the fold of his garment and touches with his fold bread or stew or wine or oil or any kind of food, does it become holy?’” The priests answered and said, “No.” ¹³Then Haggai said, “If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?” The priests answered and said, “It does become unclean.” ¹⁴Then Haggai answered and said, “So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, declares the Lord, and so with every work of their hands. And what they offer there is unclean.

(2) Leviticus 6:25-27

²⁵“Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the Lord; it is most holy. ²⁶The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tent of meeting. ²⁷Whatever touches its flesh shall be holy, and when any of its blood is splashed on a garment, you shall wash that on which it was splashed in a holy place.

(3) Haggai 2:15-19

¹⁵Now then, consider from this day onward. Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the Lord, ¹⁶how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. ¹⁷I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to me, declares the Lord. ¹⁸Consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider: ¹⁹Is the seed yet in the barn? Indeed, the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have yielded nothing. But from this day on I will bless you.”

(4) Haggai 2:20-23

²⁰The word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, ²¹“Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, ²²and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms. I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders. And the horses and their riders shall go down, every one by the sword of his brother. ²³On that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, the son of Shealtiel, declares the Lord, and make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the Lord of hosts.”

(5) Jeremiah 22:24-25,30

²⁴“As I live, declares the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off ²⁵and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans... ³⁰Thus says the LORD: “Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.”

(6) Matthew 1:1,11-12,16

I The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham... ¹¹and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. ¹²And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah [Coniah] was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,... ¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.