

Blessing the Holy Not Busy

Review

- Israelite people exiled from homes and land by Babylonian Empire for over 70 years
- 539 Babylonian Empire falls to Cyrus the Great signaling the beginning of Medo-Persian empire-In 538 exiles allowed to return to Jerusalem
- 50 000 people return to rebuild temple that has been destroyed, enjoy God's presence with them

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Review

- 18 months spent clearing rubble and preparing foundation for the building
- The altar is up, they have a place to gather, but getting established takes priority in their lives
- 15 Years later Haggai has four messages in four months to people living in ruins with a job yet undone

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1. God Issues a Call to Consider

- “give careful thought to your ways”
- says, you are a people unfulfilled, without purpose, unsatisfied because your priorities and perspective are wrong.

2. God Issues a Call To Commence

- desire of God to dwell with them, bless them, be honored in their lives
- calls them to action building the temple

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1. Practice Obedience and Fear

- Timely and appropriate response to God's call
- Awe and reverence of God he deserves (fear)

2. Acknowledge the Provision of God

- "I am with You" - in a lack of supplies, when we cannot see the way, when circumstances look impossible.
- God will restore passion and vision, we do not have to manufacture it in serving Him.

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“On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai: ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says, Ask the priests what the law says: if a person carries consecrated meat in the fold of his garment and that fold touches some bread or stew, some wine, oil or other food, does it become consecrated?’ The priests answered, ‘no.’ Then Haggai said, ‘If a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches one of these things, does it become defiled?’ ‘Yes’, the priests replied, ‘it becomes defiled.’ Then Haggai said, ‘So it is with this people and this nation in my sight,’ declares the Lord. ‘Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled.”

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“Now give careful thought to this from this day on -- consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the Lords temple. When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. I struck all the work of your hands with blight and mildew and hail, yet you did not turn to me declares the Lord. From this day on, from this twenty fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the Lords temple was laid. Give careful thought: is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. ‘From this day on I will bless you.’”

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1. Reminder of the Past

- Question posed to the bright minds of the day
- Holiness is not contagious
- Holiness - to consecrate, to separate, to set aside for a purpose
- Lev. 19:2 - “*You shall be holy for I the Lord your God am Holy.*”
- thought because they were working on God’s project, being obedient - they would be holy

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1. Reminder of the Past

- Attitude is everything
- We can defile the holy through interaction with the unholy, we cannot be made holy by association

2. Re-Assurance for the Future

- vs. 15 - give careful thought to this from now on
- not - dwell on past, live with defeat
- note - God clearly says “I” withheld blessing
- understand his purpose not punishment but to restore

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2. Re-Assurance for the Future

- Look at change in vs. 19 - “until now” change coming - “From this day on”
- God clearly assures them of a future full of blessing if they will be committed to holiness that simply results in actions that please God

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So What

1. Remember - being in the right place, doing the right things, being surrounded by the right people - does not make you holy!

- You are made Holy by God's work in your heart and life, and that makes your obedience pleasing to God

2. Be Reassured - failure does not preclude God's blessing in your future. Return to a right heart and walk with God and He will bless you