

Title: **A PROMISE**
THAT OUGHT TO REVIVE

Text: Haggai 1:13-14
Subject: *Jehovah's Promised Presence*
Date: Sunday Evening — February 3, 2008
Tape : Haggai #5
Readings: *Ron Wood and James Jordan*
Introduction:

The title of my message tonight is **A PROMISE THAT OUGHT TO REVIVE**. The prophet Haggai was a divinely appointed revivalist. He was specifically chosen and sent of God to stir up his people who had shamefully and sinfully ensnared themselves with the things of this world. He was sent for the reviving of a people who, having been delivered by God from Babylonian captivity, made themselves slaves to their own lust. I realize that the Jewish nation was only typical of God's church. Israel after the flesh was only typical of "the Israel of God." But they were typical of God's people. As such they were...

- A Divinely Chosen People.
- A Covenant Blessed People.
- A Specially Redeemed People — The Paschal Lamb.
- A Miraculously Saved People — Egypt, Babylon.
- A Wondrously Preserved People. Though Israel often forgot him, their God never forgot them.

In a word, typically, they were a people exactly like you and me. Yet, this people to whom the Lord God had been so gracious, this people whom he had so greatly and distinguishingly blessed, this people for whom he had done everything, devoted themselves to their lusts, while the house of God laid before them in ruins and the worship of God was nothing but a thing men sometimes talked about.

Haggai was sent of God to rouse them from their lethargy and indifference. How? By what means could such a people be revived? What message would the Lord God give his prophet to revive his sinful, languishing people? If I have read this prophecy correctly, and I am confident that I have, the message God gave to Haggai was precisely the same message he gave to Isaiah, to John the Baptist and to every man he has ever sent to speak to eternity bound sinners in his name. It can be summed up in two short sentences.

- “All flesh is grass!”
- “Behold your God!”

First, Haggai exposed the sins of the people, declaring, “*all flesh is grass*” (1:3-11).

(Haggai 1:3-11) “Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, (4) *Is it* time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house *lie* waste? (5) Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. (6) Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag with holes. (7) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. (8) Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD. (9) Ye looked for much, and, lo, *it came* to little; and when ye brought *it* home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that *is* waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. (10) Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed *from* her fruit. (11) And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon *that* which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.”

Haggai was a faithful prophet. He told the people plainly, in scathing terms that they were a corrupt, sinful people who fully deserved to be abandoned by God forever. Now, hear me, my brother. Hear me, my sister. Hear me, you who are yet afar off.

- Do you sense that God has forsaken you? — You deserve to be forsaken!
- Do you imagine that the Lord is about to cast you down into hell? — You deserve to be cast into hell!
- Do you feel yourself shut up in darkness, that the heavens are brass, that the God of al grace refuses to be gracious to you? — That is exactly what you deserve.

How we abuse his mercies! How we presume upon his goodness! How we trample upon his loving kindness! If ever there was a person on God's earth who deserved to be cast into hell, that person is you. — That person is me!

(Isaiah 1:2-9) “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. (3) The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: *but* Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. (4) Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. (5) Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. (6) From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. (7) Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers. (8) And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. (9) Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, *and* we should have been like unto Gomorrah.”

Our sins scream for God's wrath; but blessed be his name, the voice of our Savior's blood drowns the sound of our screams before our Father's throne. He who sits yonder upon the throne is the God of all grace, “*who delighteth in mercy.*” So I bid you, in the teeth of all your depravity, corruption and sin, “*Behold your God!*” He it is who...

- Loved you with an everlasting love.
- Chose you to be his own.
- Redeemed you with his blood.
- Called you by his Spirit.
- Preserves you by his grace.

Particularly, I want you to behold him and hear just one sweet word of promise from his gracious lips. It is a promise that ought to revive our souls from the most debasing lethargy. It is the promise by which the Lord God

revived his people in Haggai's day. May it be a promise spoken from the lips of the Almighty to you and to me, for the reviving of our souls this day!

(Haggai 1:13-14) "Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I *am* with you, saith the LORD. (14) And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,"

"*I am with you, saith the LORD.*" To whom was this promise made? In what condition were they in, when the Lord made this promise to them? (Read vv 3-11 again.) What a blessed promise to such a miserably wretched people! But there it is. It stands here like a pillar of fire to light the way and lift our souls out of darkness. "*I am with you, saith the LORD.*"

Let's look at that promise, as it is given by the God of heaven to chosen sinners just like you and me, and see what it assures us of. — "*I am with you, saith the LORD.*"

GOD'S PROMISE TO ISAAC **WHEN HE LEFT ABIMELECH**

(Genesis 26:24) And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, **I am the God of Abraham** thy father: **fear not**, for **I am with thee**, and **will bless thee**, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

GOD'S PROMISE TO JACOB **AT BETHEL, THE GATE OF HEAVEN**

Jacob was fleeing from Esau in fear. Looking at himself and what he had done, Jacob had every reason to be afraid.

(Genesis 28:12-17) "And he dreamed, and behold **a ladder** set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. (13) And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham

thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; (14) And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (15) And, **behold, I am with thee**, and **will keep thee in all places whither thou goest**, and **will bring thee again into this land**; for **I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee** of. (16) And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not. (17) And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven.”

GOD’S PROMISE TO US **THE SONS OF JACOB**

(Isaiah 41:10-14) “**Fear thou not**; for **I am with thee**: be not dismayed; for **I am thy God**: I **will strengthen thee**; yea, I will **help thee**; yea, I will **uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness**. (11) Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. (12) Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. (13) For I the LORD thy God will **hold thy right hand**, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. (14) Fear not, **thou worm Jacob**, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith **the LORD**, and **thy redeemer**, the **Holy One of Israel**.”

(Isaiah 43:1-5) “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for **I have redeemed thee**, I have **called thee** by thy name; **thou art mine**. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been

honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for **I am with thee.**”

GOD’S PROMISE TO HIS TREMBLING PROPHET

(Jeremiah 1:7-9) “But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. (8) Be not afraid of their faces: for **I am with thee to deliver thee,** saith the LORD. (9) Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.”

(Jeremiah 1:17-19) “Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. (18) For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. (19) And they shall fight against thee; but **they shall not prevail against thee;** for **I am with thee,** saith the LORD, to deliver thee.”

(Jeremiah 15:20-21) “And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for **I am with thee to save thee** and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. (21) And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.”

GOD’S PROMISE TO HIS ELECT

(Jeremiah 30:11) “For **I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee:** though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”

(Jeremiah 42:11) “Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: for **I am with you to save you,** and to deliver you from his hand.”

(Jeremiah 46:28) “**Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee;** for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.”

GOD’S PROMISE TO HIS CHURCH

(Matthew 28:18-20) “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you alway,** *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”

GOD’S PROMISE TO HIS FEARFUL PREACHER

(Acts 18:9-10) “Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: (10) For **I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt** thee: for I have much people in this city.”

THE PROMISE THAT REVIVED GOD’S PEOPLE

(Haggai 1:13) “Then spake Haggai the LORD’S messenger in the LORD’S message unto the people, saying, *I am with you,* saith the LORD.

How this promise of our God ought to revive us! How it ought to awaken us! But it never will, if all we have is the promise in word. If the promise revives, there must be something else. It must be accompanied to our souls by the Lord himself stirring our spirits (v. 14).— “*And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God.*”

(Haggai 2:4-5) “Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I *am* with you, saith the LORD of hosts: (5) *According to* the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.”

- His covenant is ordered in all things and sure.
- Therefore his Spirit remains with us.
- We have, therefore, nothing to fear.

Amen.