

A Healthy Dose of Promises

Haggai; Coast School of Theology; Pastor Earl Miles; 6-30-2019

Intro

- Ezra-Nehemiah (originally one book; background for Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi)
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi
- 1 & 2 Chronicles (originally one book; summary of OT history)

Some questions to get us started:

- Ever think of life as a building project?
- Ever lose sight of what you're supposed to be building?
- Ever need some motivation to start building?
- Ever just get discouraged and want to quit?
- Do you see your daily life as part of a bigger story?

The practical importance of faith in the promises of God is seen in the book of Haggai.

Truth:

- God is the Supreme Good.
- Man is an idol worshiper.
- Jesus is the double cure.
- Faith is trust in the promises.**
- Love is the obedience of faith.

Why do we say that? (Romans 4; Hebrews 11)

The way of walking with God has always been the way of faith and the way of faith has always been the way of trusting in God's promises and living in light of them.

Response:

- Live to glorify and enjoy God through trust and love.
- Trust in Jesus for pardon and perfection.
- Hope in God for help and happiness.**
- Pursue love by trusting and obeying God's Word.
- Pursue love by submitting to God's will.

Three elements of saving faith:

- Notia (knowledge)

- Assensus (assent or agreement)
- Fiducia (trust)

Notitia refers to the content of faith, the things we believe. There are certain things we are required to believe about Christ, namely, that He is the Son of God, that He is our Savior, that He has provided an atonement, and so on.

Assensus is the conviction that the content of our faith is true. One can know about the Christian faith and yet believe that it is not true. We might have a doubt or two mixed with our faith, but there has to be a certain level of intellectual affirmation and conviction if we are to be saved. Before anyone can really trust in Jesus Christ, he has to believe that Christ indeed is the Savior, that He is who He claimed to be. Genuine faith says that the content, the *notitia*, is true.

Fiducia refers to personal trust and reliance. Knowing and believing the content of the Christian faith is not enough, for even demons can do that (James 2:19). Faith is effectual only if one personally trusts in Christ alone for salvation. It is one thing to give an intellectual assent to a proposition but quite another to place personal trust in it. We can say that we believe in justification by faith alone and yet still think that we are going to get to heaven by our achievements, our works, or our striving. It is easy to get the doctrine of justification by faith into our heads, but it is hard to get it into the bloodstream such that we cling to Christ alone for salvation. – RC Sproul

“Judge not Christ’s love by providences, but by promises.” – Thomas Wilcox, puritan, Honey Out of the Rock

The Bible Project Video: Haggai

Background

- Written by Haggai who may have been about 70 or so years old
- Four messages delivered in the Fall of 520 BC before the completion of the second temple in 516 BC
- It is prophecy
- It is written in prose instead of poetry
- Haggai speaks words of rebuke and promise to the returned exiles in Jerusalem to restart the building and completion of the temple

Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14

Three Stages of the Exile

- First wave of Jews to Babylon with Daniel (605 BC)
- Second wave of Jews to Babylon with Ezekiel (597 BC)
- Third wave of Jews to Babylon with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (586 BC)

Three Stages of the Return from Exile

- Return to rebuild the temple under Zerubbabel (538 – 516 BC) (Ezra 1:3)
- Return to instruct the people under Ezra (458-457 BC) (Ezra 7:10)
- Return to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah (444-425 BC) (Nehemiah 1:3; 2:5)

Events

- Fall of Babylon and the decree of Cyrus the Persian (539 BC)
- Attempt to destroy the Jews with Esther (483-473 BC)
- Exile with the destruction of the temple to Return from Exile with the rebuilding of the temple (70 years = 586-516 BC)
- Less than 52,000 people returned out of 2 or 3 million
- Many did not want to travel the 900 miles and endure hardship, but preferred the comforts of Babylon
- Altar built and foundation of the temple laid in 536-534 BC (Ezra 3)
- Work on rebuilding the temple was halted from 534-520 BC (Ezra 4)
- Work on the temple completed in 516 BC (Ezra 5)

Reminders from Ezra-Nehemiah

1. God keeps His promises. – Isaiah 44:24-28; 45:1-4; Jeremiah 29:10-14
2. God's Work May Produce a Mixed Bag of Emotions – Ezra 3:10-13
3. God's Work Will Provoke Opposition – Ezra 4:1-7, 23-24; Nehemiah 2:17-20; 4:1-8; 6:10-14
4. God Turns Our Opponents Actions to Our Good – Ezra 5:1-5; 6:1-12, 22; Nehemiah 13:1-3

Outline

1. Introduction: Reluctant Rebuilders (Hag. 1:1-2)
 1. Characters (Hag. 1:1)
 2. Context (Hag. 1:2)
2. Consider Your Ways: Fruitless Prosperity (Hag. 1:3-12)
 1. Work without satisfaction (Hag. 1:3-11)
 2. General response: obedience and fear (Hag. 1:12)
3. Promise and Progress (Hag. 1:13-15a)
 1. God's promise (Hag. 1:13)
 2. Specific response: work begins (Hag. 1:14-15a)
4. The Former and Latter Glory of This House (Hag. 1:15b-2:9)
 1. Comparing past and present (Hag. 1:15b-2:3)
 2. Acting based on the past (Hag. 2:4-5)

3. An image of God's house restored (Hag. 2:6–9)
5. Consider Your Ways: Holiness and Defilement; Repentance and Blessing (Hag. 2:10–19)
 1. Analogy: holiness and defilement (Hag. 2:10–14)
 2. Consider life before restoration began: you did not turn (Hag. 2:15–17)
 3. Consider life since restoration began: I will bless (Hag. 2:18–19)
6. Zerubbabel: The Signet Ring (Hag. 2:20–23)
 1. Destruction upon kingdoms (Hag. 2:20–22)
 2. An image of David's house restored (Hag. 2:23) – ESV Study Bible

Embracing the Promises

What does an embracing of God's promises do for us?

It shapes ...

1. Our priorities. (1:1-11)

How is this about priorities? (4, 5, 7)

Where's the promise in this?

Promise of discipline (9)

Covenant curses: Deuteronomy 7:13; 11:8-15; 28:29, 38-40; Leviticus 26:20)

Why didn't they build?

- Hostile opposition of their neighbors. (fear)
- Concern for their own comforts and lifestyle.
- Economic hardships.
- Indifference to the temple and things of the Lord.

Implied promise of blessing for obedience (7-8)

Matthew 6:24-34

2. Our participation. (1:12-15)

How is this about participation? (12, 14)

Where's the promise in this? (13)

The promise of His presence (help, blessing)

How does this relate to building the kingdom and Matthew 28:18-20?
Matthew 10:37-42

3. Our perseverance. (2:1-9)

How is this about perseverance? (3-5)

Where's the promise in this?

Past promise reaffirmed (5)

Covenant promises: Exodus 33:12-17; Numbers 11:16-17

This message was given on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles which celebrated God's provision for Israel during their 40 years in the wilderness after they came out of Egypt (1445 BC).

Promise for the future (6-9)

Ultimate shaking (Hebrews 12:26-28)

Latter glory (1 Kings 8:10-11; John 1:14)

2:7 is hard to translate:

and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the Lord of hosts. - NKJV

I will shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will be brought to this Temple. I will fill this place with glory, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. - NLT

and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts. - NRSV

Galatians 6:6-10

4. Our purity. (2:10-19)

How is this about purity? (13-14)

Where is the promise in this? (19)

The people were defiled but God was determined to bless (see the next message on the same day)!

1 John 3:1-3

5. Our perspective. (2:20-23)

How is this about perspective? (23)

Where's the promise in this? (21-23)

Jesus is the descendent of Zerubbabel (Matthew 1:12; Luke 3:27) and Zerubbabel is a foreshadowing of Jesus.

Signet ring: honor, authority and power (even preciousness)

Official representative of the Davidic dynasty and the resumption of the Messianic line following the exile

Romans 8:28-39

Embracing THE Promise

What promise is to be most life-shaping?

The promise of life in the presence of God ...

The temple was/is ...

1. Where God's presence is manifest
2. A building
3. Christ
4. Church
5. Christians
6. The Garden of Eden
7. The New Heaven and Earth (Garden of Eden 2.0)

They heard the sound of the Lord God **walking** in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. – Genesis 3:8

²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He

stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. – Genesis 3:23-24

Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may **dwell** among them. – Exodus 25:8

I will **dwell** among the sons of Israel and will be their God. They shall know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might **dwell** among them; I am the Lord their God. – Exodus 29:45-46

Now **the Lord** spoke to Moses after **the death of the** two sons **of** Aaron, when **they** had approached **the presence of the Lord** and died. – Leviticus 16:1

Moreover, I will make My **dwelling** among you, and My soul will not reject you. I will also walk among you and **be your God** , and you shall **be My people** . – Leviticus 26:11-12

You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I **dwell** ; for I the Lord am **dwelling** in the midst of the sons of Israel.” – Numbers 35:34

But you shall seek *the Lord* at the place which the Lord your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His **dwelling** , and there you shall come. – Deuteronomy 12:5

“I have built You a lofty house, And a place for Your **dwelling** forever.” – 2 Chronicles 6:2

O Lord, I love the habitation of Your house And the place where Your glory **dwells** . – Psalm 26:8

One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may **dwell** in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord And to meditate in His temple. – Psalm 27:4

How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near *to You* To **dwell** in Your courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple. – Psalm 65:4

And the wolf will **dwell** with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. – Isaiah 11:6

Indeed, the Lord will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. And her wilderness He will make like **Eden** , And her desert like the garden of the Lord; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody. – Isaiah 51:3

‘You shall **be My people** , And I will **be your God** .’” – Jeremiah 30:22

My **dwelling** place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. – Ezekiel 37:27

“Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, And that I am the Lord **your God**, And there is no other; And **My people** will never **be** put to shame. – Joel 2:27

Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will **dwell** in your midst,” declares the Lord. “Many nations will join themselves to the Lord in that day and will become My people. Then I will **dwell** in your midst, and you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you. – Zechariah 2:10-11

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a **garden**, in which He entered with His disciples. – John 18:1

Now in the place where He was crucified there was a **garden**, and in the **garden** a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. – John 19:41

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God **dwells** in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. – Romans 8:9

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God **dwells** in you? -1 Corinthians 3:16

Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, “I will **dwell** in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. – 2 Corinthians 6:16

in whom you also are being built together into a **dwelling** of God in the Spirit. – Ephesians 2:22

These will pay **the** penalty **of** eternal destruction, away from **the** presence **of** the Lord and from **the** glory **of** His power, - 2 Thessalonians 1:9

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will **dwell** among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, - Revelation 21:3

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat **of** the **tree of life** which is in the Paradise **of** God.’ – Revelation 2:7

Then he showed me a river **of** the water **of** life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne **of** God and **of** the Lamb, in the middle **of** its street. On either side **of** the river was the **tree of life**, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves **of** the **tree** were for the healing **of** the nations. – Revelation 22:1-2

Conclusion

What promise/promises are you building your life on/around?

The promise of the American Dream?

The promise of the Kingdom of God?

You will make known to me the path of life;

In Your presence is fullness of joy;

In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. – Psalm 16:11

“Hope, kindled by the divine promise, affects the entire life of a man in his inmost thoughts, ways, and feelings.” (20)

“[Hope in God’s promise] may seem to be of less importance than correct moral deportment, but in truth it is of [great importance], not only in itself, but in that which it produces upon the mind, heart, and life.” (20)

“[Hope in God’s promises] will endure trials, conquer temptations, and enjoy heaven below.” (21)

“When we believe God as he is revealed in Christ Jesus, we believe all *his promises*. Confidence in the Person involves confidence in all that he speaks: hence we accept all the promises of God as being sure and certain. We do not trust one promise and doubt another but we rely upon each one as true, and we believe it to be true *to us* so far as it has respect to our condition and circumstances.” (32)

“God loves faith because it honors him, and also because it leads to acts of obedience to him, which obedience includes love to our fellow-man.” (33)

“...as we believe our Bibles, we are bound to rely upon the promises contained there in.” (38)

“It is the cause of much weakness too many that they do not treat the promises of God as realities. If a friend makes them a promise, they regard it as a substantial thing, and look for that which it secures; but the declarations of God are often viewed as so many words which means very little.” (38f)

“Why does it seem a singular thing to rest on the promise of God? Somehow it looks to many to be a dreamy, sentimental, mystical business; and yet if we view it calmly it is the most matter-of-fact transaction that can be. God is real: all else is shadow. He is certain: all else is questionable. He must keep his word, this is an absolute necessity: how else could he be God? To believe God should be an act of the mind which needs no effort.” (40)

“God’s promises are the peculiar treasure of believers: the substance of faith’s heritage lies in them. All the promises of our covenant God are ours to have and to hold as our personal

possession. By faith we receive and embrace them, and they constitute our true riches.” (Or three)

“Faith without a promise would be a foot without ground to stand upon.” (44)

“When the Lord gives us faith, and we rest on his promise, then we are brought face to face with him.” (47)

“The promise... excites prayer. What is prayer but the promise pleaded? A promise is, so to speak, the raw material of prayer. Prayer irrigates the fields of life with the waters which are stored up in the reservoirs of promise. The promise is the power of prayer.” (50)

“In my time of trouble I like to find a promise which exactly fits my need, and then to put my finger on it, and say, “Lord, this is thy word; I beseech thee to prove that it is so, by carrying it out in my case. I believe that this is your own writing; and I pray thee make it good to my faith.””(51)

“Let us know the promises. Should we not carry them at our fingers’ ends? Should we not know them better than anything else?” (57)

“What is the use of having an anchor at home when your ship is in a storm at sea? What avails a promise which you cannot remember so as to pleaded in prayer?” (58)

“Oh that our conversation were more often sweetened with the precious promises of God! After dinner we often sit for half an hour, and pull our ministers to pieces, or scandalize our neighbors. It would be far better if we said, “Now, friend, quote a promise,” and if the other replied, “And you mention a promise too.” Then let each one speak according to his own personal knowledge concerning the Lord’s fulfillment of these promises, and let everyone present tell the story of the Lord’s faithfulness to him. By such holy converse we would warm our own hearts, and gladden one another’s spirits.” (59)

“I have never yet met with a person who trusted God, and found the Lord’s promise to fail him.” (66)

“Each one must personally accept, adopt, and endorse the promise of God by his own individual faith, or he will derive no benefit from it.” (79)

“We may rest assured that somewhere in the inspired page there is a promise fitting the occasion.” (88)

“Therefore trust, and be not afraid. What ever else may prove a failure, the promise of God never will. Treasure laid up in this Bank is beyond all hazard.” (93)

Charles Spurgeon’s *According to Promise: or the Method of the Lord’s Dealings with His Chosen.*