

Consider Your Ways The Book of Haggai

The Story Behind the Prophecy Ezra 1-5

- Three main regional powers over this time period - Assyria, Babylon and Persia
- Israel changed from being one united kingdom called Israel to a divided kingdom with Israel in the North and Judah in the South.
- In 722 BC, Assyria conquered Israel (northern kingdom) and took them into exile.
- Babylon defeated Assyria as the primary power. They conquered Judah (southern kingdom) in 586 BC and took them into exile.
- Persia defeated Babylon, ruled the region, and started allowing Jews to return from exile and begin the process of rebuilding the Temple in 538 BC (Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-12).
- Local enemies, the Samaritans, convinced the king to make them stop rebuilding. Construction stops for 16 yrs.
- Now, Haggai enters the scene. Ezra 5:1 - *“When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of God of Israel...”*

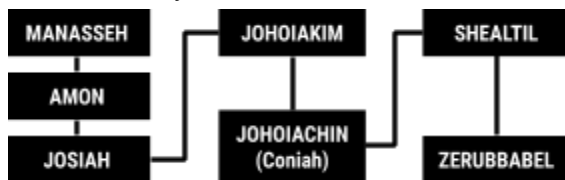
Consider Your Ways Haggai 1

Haggai 1:5 – *“Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Consider your ways!’”*

- “Consider your ways” is in the book of Haggai four times in two short chapters (1:5; 1:7; 2:15; 2:18)
- Consider what?
 - The work on the temple stopped for 16 years, and they weren’t trying to start again. They were working on their own homes but not God’s house (Haggai 1:1-4).
 - The people gave to a rebuilding fund for the temple at the beginning (Ezra 2:68-69) and the money was spent to buy cedar wood from Tyre (Ezra 3:7-8). Then Haggai 1:4 says they lived in wood paneled houses. Perhaps this judgment comes from using God’s wood on their own homes.
 - They focused on themselves, and so God brings prophetic judgment and drought (Haggai 1:10-11).
- Consider - set your whole heart and self on examining the course your life has taken.
- *“Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. **Not so with you.** Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.’”* Mark 10:42-43 (NIV)

Reverse the Curse Haggai 2

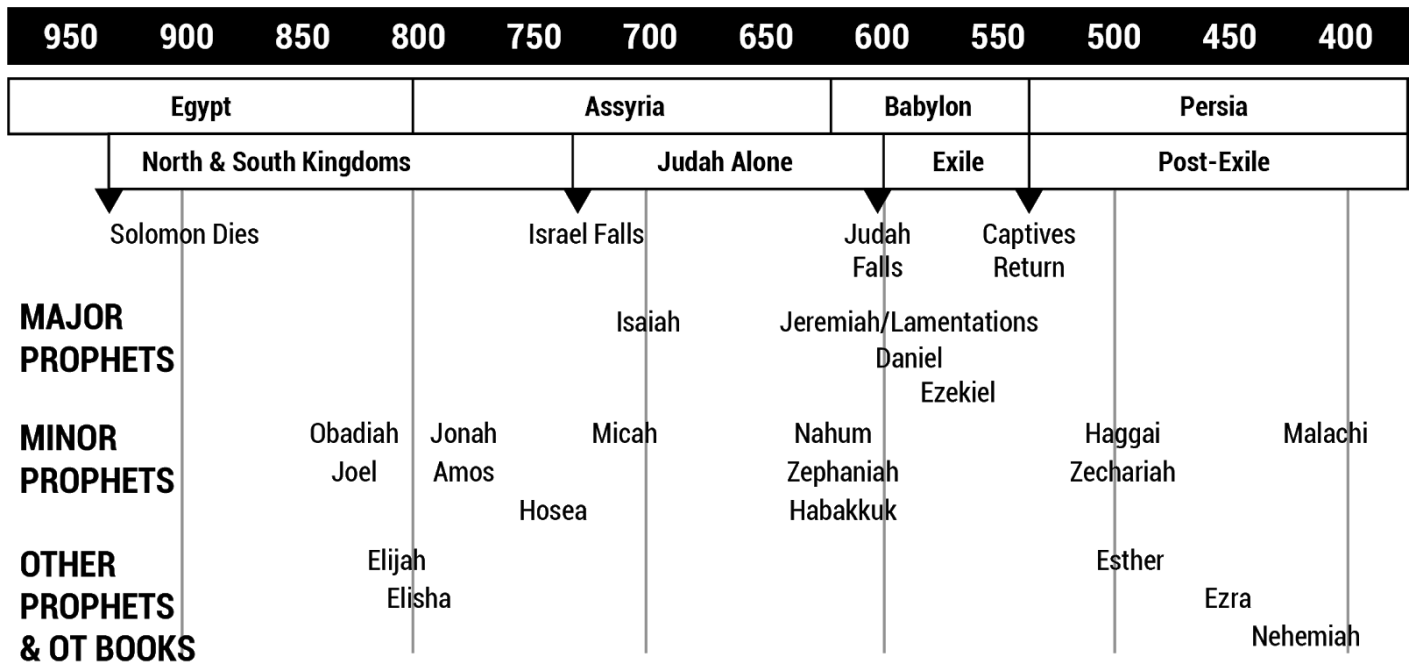
- Zerubbabel’s family tree:



- The Curse of Coniah - Jeremiah 22:24-30. The signet ring is violently thrown off and God puts in writing that He is done with this family line.
- The reversal of the curse - Haggai 2:20-23. The signet ring is put back on the chosen one.
- We are not doomed to generational patterns of sin and dysfunction. God breaks the cycle.

Response

- The people of Judah respond to this prophetic word and rebuild the temple. God reverses the curse he had on this generation of people.
- We have generational cycles in our families that we feel like we can’t break. It will take the power of the Holy Spirit and the grace of Jesus Christ to break it, but He will as we respond to Him by crying out in prayer.



Digging Deeper + LifeGroup Discussion:

1. How do you stay intentional about “considering your ways?” Are there process that you go through? Share with each other what you are doing or what you think you could be doing.
2. How easy have you found it for your faith to turn self-centered when you started completely focused on God’s ways?
3. What has been your experience of generational sin and how can God help you break that cycle?

In Response:

COMMUNION: Communion is a “meal” for believers in Jesus Christ to help us give thanks and remember His death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. The matzah bread represents the body of Christ given for us. The cup of juice represents the blood of Christ that was shed to pay the price for our sins. We are called to examine ourselves before taking communion (Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-34). We typically pass communion elements the first Sunday of the month. Most other weeks, communion is available at tables around the room after the sermon.

GIVING: The offering is received during each Sunday service. This is a way to express a wholehearted trust in God and worship Him through giving. It is also an act of obedience to God that helps free us from money having mastery over us. Tithing is a biblical command of 10% as a baseline of giving, but the New Testament calls us as followers of Jesus to give even more. Our prayer is that you plan ahead to give purposefully and joyfully to God, helping to further ministry locally and globally in Jesus’ name. Discover ways to give on the front of the bulletin or calvarylife.org/give

PRAYER POINTS: These locations at the front right and left of the Worship Center will have people available to pray with you during the time of singing after the sermon and after the service as well. These people are excited to pray with you about anything in your life, including praying to tell Jesus that you believe in Him as God and trust Him for salvation. They will also pray for any health needs, stresses, worries, family members, temptations or anything else.

PRAYER ROOM: The Prayer Room is located at the front right of the Worship Center Auditorium through the doorway behind the Prayer Point. This is a quiet space that you can go to at anytime during the service to be able to pray and reflect on what God is doing in your heart.