

Small Group – Bethany Church Long Beach
Build Week 3 – Haggai 2:1-19
Jeff Levine – March 13, 2016

Intro:

- What was “the takeaway” (the most important point) from Sunday’s sermon and/or the sermon text, in your opinion?
- What insight from Sunday’s sermon did you find most helpful, or eye-opening, or troubling (pick any or all of the above)?
- Share one of your favorite memories from your time at Bethany. What made this moment significant?
- In what ways do you see yourself trying to recreate the past?
- How might God call you to help others experience similar significant moments in the present?

Group Questions:

1. Haggai draws on the Exodus story for background to two of his sermons. **Haggai 2:4-5** recalls the exodus from Egypt, and **Haggai 2:14** uses same title combination found in **Exodus 33:12-13** to refer to God’s people (“this people,” and “this nation.” These two passages are *the only two in the whole Bible* to use these two titles together, so Haggai is *clearly* doing this on purpose).

What might Haggai be trying to invoke with these allusions to the exodus stories? How does this line of thought in turn factor into Haggai’s argument? In other words, why should we care that Haggai makes use of Exodus?

2. In this section, the Lord assures and encourages the people through his presence (**Haggai 2:4**), promises he made in the past (**2:5**), and his promises for the future (**2:6-9**). Which of these promises mean the most to you in your times of need or uncertainty?
3. **Haggai 2:10-19** helps us recognize the power of sin in our lives. According to the story, the people’s sin disqualifies the temple sacrifices—*the very same acts designed to cover sins and enhance their relationship with God in the first place!* Compare our text with the following passages: **1 Sam 15:22-23**; **Ps 51:16-17**; **Isa 1:10-20**; **Amos 5:21-27**; **Mic 6:6-8**.

Describe what a bad sacrifice looks like.

What is God’s response to a bad sacrifice?

Describe what a good sacrifice looks like.

Are there any areas of your life where you need to improve the quality of your sacrifice? Explain.

4. In **Haggai 2:15 & 18**, the people are again told to “consider . . .” What are they to consider? What consequences are they reminded of (**2:16-17; 2:19**)? What promise is given?
5. *Hear—fear—work*: Is there perhaps an area of your life where you—*like Haggai’s audience*— need to “hear” and “fear” God more appropriately? Identify this area, and then write out one S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-specific) goal for you to begin to “work” on it this week.

Share this with your small group and end with prayer for each other directed along these lines.