

It's Time to Trust God With the Future

It's Time #8 - Pastor Gary Combs - March 2, 2025 - Haggai 2:20-23

INTRO: Today we're concluding our sermon series through the book of Haggai with a sermon entitled: "It's Time to Trust God With the Future." Our theme comes from...

Haggai 1:2; 2:4-5 (ESV) "These people say the **time** has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord... Yet now **be strong**... **Work**, for I am with you, declares the Lord... My Spirit remains in your midst. **Fear not.**"

God told the Israelites that it was time to BE STRONG, DO THE WORK, and BE FEARLESS! I believe that God is telling us It's Time to do the same! If we obey Him, I believe we can trust God with the future that His plans and purposes for us will come to pass just as He said!

Need: Do you worry about the future? Do you ever wonder if God is really in control when the world seems chaotic? Maybe you feel uncertain about your job, your health, or your family. Maybe you're looking at the state of our nation or the world and wondering, "Where is this all going?"

Trans: The people of Israel in Haggai's day had similar concerns. They were a small, struggling remnant in a land that once flourished under King David and Solomon. Their temple was in ruins, their enemies were strong, and they wondered if God's promises to them were still true. But through Haggai, God gave them assurance that they could trust Him with the future.

BODY: In Haggai 2:20-23, God spoke through the prophet Haggai to assure Zerubbabel that he could trust God with the future of Israel. We can trust God with the future. How can we trust God with the future? The text gives **three reasons** why we can trust God with the future.

Read text: Haggai 2:20-23 (ESV) ²⁰ The word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, ²¹ "Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, ²² and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms. I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders. And the horses and their riders shall go down, every one by the sword of his brother. ²³ On that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, the son of Shealtiel, declares the LORD, and make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the LORD of hosts."

THREE REASONS TO TRUST GOD WITH THE FUTURE:

1. Because God's sovereign plans will prevail.

EXP: (20-22) Notice God's "I am about to..." statements. God has plans for the future. He knows what He's "about to" do! In Haggai's day, Israel was small, weak, and surrounded by powerful nations. The people probably wondered: "Does God still have a plan for us?" In this final message of Haggai, God speaks directly to Zerubbabel, Israel's governor, giving him a promise of hope and restoration for Israel's future.

"**Second time**" (20) (שְׁנֵי, *šēnī*) - second (the number), again. God's first word that day had been for the priests and the people. This word was for Zerubbabel.

"**Twenty-fourth day of the month**" (20) - 24th day of Kislev, December 18th.

"**Speak to Zerubbabel**" (21) - This is unique to close the book; every previous word has gone to Zerubbabel then to Joshua then to all the people. But not just to him, but to him as a Christological type.

"**I am about to shake**" (21; 2x) (שָׁעַר, *rā'āš*) - to quake, shake. As God had said in 2:6.

"**Heavens and the earth**" (21) - There will be a universal upheaval.

"**Overthrow**" (22; 2x) (הִפְּאֵק, *hāpāk*) - to overthrow, overturn. "Make great commotions, changes, and revolutions in the world, by wars, and otherwise: the Persian kingdom being subdued by the Grecian; the Grecian by the Romans." (*Gill*)

"**The throne of kingdoms**" (22) (כִּסֵּא, *kissē*) - throne, authority, power. Why is "throne" singular? "The overthrow prophesied is also universal. It is not one throne only, as of Persia, but "the throne," not a change of dynasty, but "the kingdoms of the pagan." (*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*)

"**Destroy the strength of the kingdoms**" (22) (הִזְעַק, *hōzeq*) - power, strength. God is not merely dethroning them but also destroying their power and influence.

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“Chariots” (22) (מֶרְכָבָה, *merkābâ*) - chariots and horsemen being the key marks of strength for a kingdom, the most deadly tools of warfare up until the 20th century. God will remove their greatest strength.

“Every one by the sword of his brother” (22) (אָח, *’āh*) - brother, relative. God’s means of their overthrow will be self destructive, brother will kill brother, nation will destroy nation.

ARG: God’s plans and purpose will prevail.

Proverbs 19:21 (NLT) You can make many plans, but the Lord’s purpose will prevail.

ILL: Every year on our family beach trip we build a sand castle, but it never survives the oceans power. No power can stand against God’s sovereign plan. Just as the ocean washes away the sandcastle, God will shake the heavens and the earth, ensuring that His purposes prevail.



APP: We can trust God with the future because His sovereign plans will prevail!

2. Because God’s servants receive His unshakable kingdom.

EXP: (23) God calls Zerubbabel “my servant.” He was born in Babylon, born the son of kings in the line of David, but he had never sat on the throne. Yet God “declares (3x)” His intention to restore His royal line.

“On that day” (23) - Eschatological language. “When all these kingdoms... are destroyed; which shows that what follows cannot be understood literally of Zerubbabel, who lived not to see these things.” (*Gill*)

“I will take you” (23) (לָקַח, *lāqah*) - to take, lay hold of, to take a wife. God used this same language of His calling of David.

2 Samuel 7:8 (NIV) “Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel.’”

“My servant” (23) (עֶבֶד, *’ēbed*) - slave, servants, worshippers (of God). This phrase “my servant” is significant—it is the same title given to King David and to the coming Messiah (Isaiah 42:1).

Isaiah 42:1 (ESV) Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

ARG: All kingdoms and powers, both in earth and in the heavens, will be shaken, but not His Kingdom!

Hebrews 12:26-28 (ESV) ²⁶ At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” ²⁷ This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe

ILL: On October 17, 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay Area with a magnitude of 6.9, causing widespread devastation. Freeways collapsed, buildings crumbled, and fires broke out across the city. However, one of the city’s most recognizable structures, the Transamerica Pyramid, stood firm. Designed with earthquakes in mind, it was built with a deep foundation and a flexible design that allowed it to absorb seismic waves without collapsing. Even though the building swayed over a foot during the quake, it emerged structurally intact while many other buildings around it suffered severe damage or complete destruction. This is a powerful picture of what it means to belong to God’s unshakable kingdom.



APP: We can trust God with the future because He has called us to be His servants and to receive His unshakeable kingdom. His Kingdom, which is now here and growing, will overcome. For it cannot be shaken. “It is established forever. In a kingdom like this there is every encouragement, for there is the assurance: (1)That all our interests there are safe; (2)That all our exertions will be crowned with ultimate success, (3)That the efforts which we make to do good will have a permanent influence on mankind, and will bless future ages; and (4)That the reward is certain.” (*Barnes’ Notes on the Whole Bible*).

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3. Because God's promised King will reign.

EXP: (23) God declares to Zerubbabel, "I will make you like a signet ring." This was a powerful statement of restoration. A signet ring was a symbol of a king's authority, power, and ownership—a tool used to seal decrees and establish unbreakable covenants. Yet, this imagery was striking because of what had happened to Zerubbabel's grandfather, Jehoiachin.

Jeremiah 22:24 (NLT) "As surely as I live," says the Lord, "I will abandon you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. Even if you were the signet ring on my right hand, I would pull you off."

Now, generations later, God reverses that curse. He declares that Zerubbabel will once again be His chosen servant—pointing forward to Jesus Christ, the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic promise.

"Make you like a signet ring" (23) (סִגְנוֹת, *hōtām*) - seal, signet, signet-ring. A signet was an emblem of the king's authority and power. One wearing or carrying the king's signet was vested with his power.

"I have chosen you" (23) (בָּחַר, *bāḥar*) - to choose, elect. What a wonderful last word to hear from the prophet; that God is with you, has chosen you and will continue His Messianic line through you.

Although there are several legends about what happened to Zerubbabel after this, the Bible is silent. It leaves Zerubbabel with these hopeful promises, and we never hear of him again until he appears in the genealogies of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:12 and Luke 3:27.

ARG: 500 years after this, Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding on a donkey, just as Zechariah had prophesied

Matthew 21:4-5 (ESV) This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

When we believed in Christ, we were marked with a seal, the promised Spirit

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV) ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

ILL: My wife and I received an invitation to attend the National Prayer Breakfast at the Washington Hilton in DC in 2018. The invitation was embossed with the presidential seal and had to be presented at the door in order to enter through several security checkpoints. Without it, we couldn't enter.



APP: We can trust God with the future because Jesus is on the throne. When we look at the chaos of the world, we must remember that God's King has already been chosen, His Kingdom is already established, and His promises are already secured.

"Our Lord Jesus is the Signet on God's right hand, for all power is given to him, and derived from him. By him, and in him, all the promises of God are yea and amen." — Matthew Henry

CONCLUSION: Haggai 2:19's promise—"from this day on I will bless you"—was ultimately about Jesus! We can trust God with the future because Jesus is on the throne and the future is in His hands.

Will you put your trust in God for the future? Because...

- 1) God's sovereign plans will prevail.
- 2) God's servants have received His unshakable kingdom.
- 3) God's chosen King, Jesus is reigning on His throne!

Let's pray and let's prepare our hearts to make our first gifts towards our faith commitments today.