



When the Work Stops

NorthRidge Church

Seth Penna

August 30, 2026

Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build – Ezra 4:4

There comes a time that the good thing that we set out to do, no matter how grand the _____ of it is, will no longer be able to run off the _____ of the initial spiritual _____.

Discouragement and the Work of God ...

- I. Backstory ... _____ and the _____
- II. Opposition to the _____
- III. Beyond _____ ... Lies, Deceit, and Manipulation

So What ...

- There will be times in everyone's life that _____ and _____ will drag us down and away from what God has placed for our life.
- Even when we get _____ and fall away; the _____ to restart the building are right where we left them.
- Even when we _____ God _____.

Appointment with God – Prayer Focus

Prayer Points in Haggai

Of the 12 books written by minor prophets, nine encourage Israelites to turn from idols to God. Because the Israelites didn't listen, God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Judah. After 70 years in captivity, King Cyrus allowed Israelites to return to their homeland to rebuild the temple. A fraction returned.

Why look at Haggai? The Book of Haggai can inspire meaningful prayers by revealing God's purposes and ways. We can apply these insights Today.

Insights that Reveal How to Pray:

- The Lord called His people to rebuild the place where they met to worship Him—the temple. The backbreaking job was met with constant opposition and discouragement. The Israelites stopped working after 2 years to concentrate on their personal homes and themselves.
 - **PRAYER:** Lord, Today You call US to build “the temple”, a place within us built by relationship and obedience to You. The enemy wants to paralyze us so the work will stop. Help us see where our thoughts and actions make us captive. Help us obey You to be set free. Help me consider my ways and Turn wherever Your spirit convicts me to Turn.
- Haggai was the Lord's spokesman to tell His people to ‘**consider their ways**’ [4 X's] and build the temple that He may take pleasure in it and be glorified. He told them their difficulties were brought about by HIM because of their lack of obedience to His call to build the temple. The Lord stirred leaders to encourage work on the house of the Lord.
 - **PRAYER:** Lord, the 16-year halt on the work of the Temple is often attributed to wrong priorities. Some ask, “WHY did the people stop the work You called them to do?” and attribute it to opposition and being overwhelmed. We ask You to stir hearts of leaders within the Church to remind us that You are WITH us. That You are calling us to grow in relationship to You and others by obeying Your commands and principles. That He is the provider of all we need. Your presence helped the work on the temple to be accomplished in five years! Help US, Lord God, to remain faithful to the task of obedience You have called us to in order that Your name be glorified. Help us CONSIDER OUR WAYS. May we get to work, seeking You and being pliable in Your hands. May we be strong, always drawing near to You. May we live without fear.
- **The CHALLENGE:** Our priorities matter. And each choice we make reflects those priorities. Our obedience affects how God chooses to work in the world. When we feel justified not to forgive someone... when we allow fear of painful consequences to keep us from obeying... we hinder the work that glorifies God. The story in Haggai should motivate us to humility and action. Pray and obey!



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There comes a time that the good thing that we set out to do, no matter how grand the **intention** of it is, will no longer be able to run off the **steam** of the initial spiritual **mountain top experience**.

Discouragement and the Work of God ...

I. Backstory ... **Faith** and the **House of God**

II. Opposition to the **Work of God**

III. Beyond **Discouragement** ... Lies, Deceit, and Manipulation

So What ...

- There will be times in everyone's life that **discouragement** and **falsehoods** will drag us down and away from what God has placed for our life.
- Even when we get **distracted** and fall away; the **tools** to restart the building are right where we left them
- Even when we **stop** God **does not**.

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