



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Haggai 2:10-19

“The Contagiousness of Sin”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Our heavenly Father, we again thank Thee and praise Thee for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. We remember the high regard with which the Lord Jesus Christ held them, and we thank Thee that he has instructed us concerning them saying the Scripture cannot be broken and illustrated that in his own life, in that he bowed to the teaching of holy Scripture on all of the aspects of his work that he came to accomplish for Thee and for us. And we pray, oh God, that we may have the same attitude toward Thy word that he had. Will Thou give us instruction and teach us as we seek through the Scriptures to find Thy will for us? We commit each one present to Thee, and we pray that the particular needs that we each have may be met through the divine provision. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Tonight we are to study the third of the messages that Haggai the prophet gave to the nation Israel, and the subject for tonight is The Contagiousness of Sin, and I put this down a little lower so you can see. I am sorry it's a little hazy, but the subject is The Contagiousness of Sin. And the Scripture is Haggai chapter 2, verse 10 through verse 19. We pride ourselves in the evangelical church today on our knowledge of the word of God, and perhaps justly. It is doubtful that many of the churches of the

past in history have had the knowledge of the Scriptures that is available for us today in 1977. Robert Rainey who was Principal of New College in the University of Edinburgh used to say that we often revere the church fathers as if they were our teachers and we were their children, but the facts are that if we study the church fathers, the one thing that impresses us is the fact that their teaching was elementary. So that in a certain sense it is we who are the fathers, and it is they who are the children. And I think that Principal Rainey had a point. We live in a day in which we have had the benefit of centuries of study of holy Scripture from the human standpoint, and then from the divine standpoint, we have had the benefit of nineteen hundred years plus, of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit to which our Lord alluded in John chapter 16.

Now, if it is true then that we pride ourselves on the knowledge of the word of God, and perhaps justly, then the Minor Prophets are very relevant to us because all of the Minor Prophets, I say this without a great deal of reflection, but it seems to me that all of the Minor Prophets were written to people who claimed that they knew truth, or who did in measure, know truth. They were written to a theocratic people who had been given the revelation of God, and so they were written to people who had at their fingertips the word of God, and not only did they have the Scriptures but they even had a body of men who were authorized by God to teach them the Scriptures, the priests. And the priests were men who were taught in the Scriptures, and it was to them that the Israelite went for instruction in the word of God. So if the Minor Prophets were written to a group of people who knew truth ideally, and if we are in the evangelical church of the 20th Century a group of people who know the truth ideally, then these are very relevant messages for us, and they speak to us in our claimed knowledge of the truth, and warn us of the dangers of failure to respond to it. Of course we should study the Minor Prophets because they are part of the Bible, and we should study all of the Scriptures because the Scriptures in all of that that they contain are a light to us.

William Cowper put it this way, “A glory gills the sacred page, majestic like the sun. It gives a light to every age. It gives, but borrows none.” The points to remember about Haggai are first that this Haggai the first prophetic book of the postexilic period and next to Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament are these. Remember that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by Babylonians in 586 B.C. Cyrus, king of Persia and conquer of Babylon issued a decree allowing Israelites to return to the land, and to rebuild the temple in 538 B.C. A little under fifty thousand returned to the land. The temple foundation was laid again in 536 B.C. fifty years after the destruction by the Babylonians. And then after the temple foundation had been laid, the Samaritans caused difficulty. And as a result of the difficulty caused a halt in the building and the work on the rebuilding of the temple languished from the years 536 B.C. to 520 B.C.

When Darius the Great came to the throne after the suicide of Cambyses, in 522 B.C. shortly after that in 520 he permitted the rebuilding of the temple to begin again, and in 520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah, the two prophets who were responsible for stirring up the people, began to preach to bring them from the paralysis of spiritual lethargy in which they had been for about sixteen years to do the work again of constructing the temple. In the 5th chapter of the book of Ezra, some of the history is given by the writer of that book, and if you wish read chapters 5 and 6 of the book of Ezra for the historical background of the book of Haggai.

Then Haggai has given us the content of four of his messages all dated, and they are dated in 520 B.C., in this very concise book and they constitute the essence, it appears of the message that he gave to the children of Israel to stir them up to do the things that God desired for them to do. Three months after the commencement of rebuilding comes this third message. It is dated December 24 520 B.C.

Now, it is not put that way. It is put in verse 10 as on the twenty-fourth of the ninth month. The ninth month was not the month of September. The ninth month according to Jewish reckoning was *Kislev*, and that month begins in the middle of

November, about in the middle of our November, and concludes in about the middle of our December, so it was on the twenty fourth of the ninth month, therefore really not December the 24th, but close to the middle of December this particular prophecy the third was given.

Now, we turn to the prophecy itself, and the first thing that we notice is the appeal for institution, which Haggai asks of the priests in order to make a point. Let's read now, verses 10 through 13 of Haggai chapter 2

“On the twenty fourth of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, (That would be 520 B.C.) the word of the LORD came to (Now, we have not noticed this before, previously it is the word of the Lord came by Haggai in verse 1, and then in verse 1 of chapter 1 the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel, but here,) the word of the Lord came to Haggai the prophet (Evidentially, this was a message that was little more personal for Haggai than the others, if we may make a point over that, and this is what the word of God said,) Thus says the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests for a ruling, (Literally for a law, for a *torah*, for an opinion just as you might ask someone for an opinion about a teaching of holy Scripture. It was the priests who had knowledge of the Scriptures. They were the scribes of the word of God, and so Haggai is told to ask the priests for a ruling.) If a man carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and touches bread with this fold or a cooked food, wine oil or any other food, will it become holy? (Now, notice the question if a man carries holy meat and touches these items will it become holy?) And the priests answered and said, No. (This was their ruling) Then Haggai said, If (Sounds like a seminary student asking professors questions.) [Laughter] Then Haggai said, if one who is unclean from a corpse touches any of these, will the later become unclean? And the priests answered and said, it will be unclean.”

Incidentally, there is no word in biblical Hebrew for our “yes,” and so the Hebrews repeated the statement, “It will become unclean.” They didn't have any, yes, that we might use. Now, again the priests were absolutely right, just like seminary

students are always right, when individuals come and ask them questions. Well, this is the appeal for instruction.

Now, remember we have had two messages previous, and the reason for the first message in chapter 1 was simply this that Israel or the Israelites who had come back had neglected to begin work on rebuilding the temple, had rather begun to rebuild their own, houses, and as a result of that God sent them that strong word of exhortation and condemnation in chapter 1. And then in chapter 2 verse 1 through verse 9, eventually the people had been discouraged by some who said, “You should have seen that temple of Solomon. This little temple that’s being constructed now cannot possibly compare with it.” And so they were very much discouraged, and as a result, Haggai was given the message of the first part of chapter 2, and particularly he pointed them on to the time when the wealth of the nations would come into the ultimate temple, which God would construct during the millennial age.

Now, we didn’t have a time to deal with the details of that verse, sometime I would like to take about thirty minutes and talk about the technicalities of it, for there are lots of interesting things that do concern the Hebrew text there, but the main point, is simply this, that the prophet prophecies that in the temple of the last days, there will come into that temple the wealth of all the nations.

Now, that is not a direct prophecy of the Messiah, but an indirect prophecy of the Messiah in the sense that the reason for the wealth of the nations pouring into the millennial temple in Jerusalem is the fact that the Messiah will have come at his Second Advent and will have established his kingdom upon the earth. And as I mentioned last time, I suggest that you read Isaiah chapter 60, which gives us, I think, a parallel prophecy to the statement that Haggai has made.

The third prophecy which begins at verse 10 and concludes with verse 19 was evidentially designed to secure the remnant against despondency because they thought that having broken with their sin and having begun to rebuild the temple, that they

deserve prosperity, but it had been several months now, and there was no evidence of prosperity, and so this prophecy is designed to secure them against this despondency that the failure to possess immediate prosperity might have induced. Haggai's method is that of the question and answer.

Now, I know this is very pleasing to those who like to teach by such methods. We do have such methods in the New Testament. We have here a question and answer method. He asks the priests certain questions, receives an answer. And then he's going to make an application of this, and he teaches in that way. We are living in the day in which it is thought to be very, very appropriate to teach by dialogue, by quiz, by panel discussion, in which we all get down and share our ignorance, frequently that is what happens. That is the bad way to do it of course, but nevertheless we all grant that there are different ways by which a person may teach. And here he teaches by means of questions and answers, and I wonder if we may not have something similar to this when our Lord, remember when he was twelve years of age, went up to Jerusalem, and he sat down with the doctors in the synagogue and exchanged questions and answers with them, and startled them with his own understanding in answer to questions that were posed in the midst of the discussion.

Well, the first question is given us in verses 11 and 12. “Thus says, the Lord of hosts, ask now the priest for a ruling. If a man carries holy meat in the fold of his garment (Now, the holy meat is evidently meat that was offered for sacrifice and therefore sanctified, and so it was carried in the folds of the garments of the priests. Now, we who are men do not have any folds in our garments by which we can carry meat like this, but they did, and so you can picture a priest who is carrying meat that had been consecrated for sacrifice, and now the prophet is asked to ask the priest,) if in this meat in the fold of his garment touches bread, or cooked food, wine oil, or any other food will it, (that is, the other food.) become holy?” In other words will there be a communication of holiness from the holy meat to the other type of food?

Now, if you are to turn to Leviticus church 6, we don't have time to do that incidentally, so you needent bother to do it now, but if you in your study of the prophecy of Haggai will turn to Leviticus chapter 6, in verse 27 you will note a passage which has direct application to this one.

Now, the statement is made there that holy meat does sanctify things that it touches, but the difference is that here we do not have direct touch. We have indirect touch. We have the fold of the garment contain the holy meat, and therefore the question essentially is this, can the holy make the unholy holy? That's the question.

Now, it doesn't mean a whole lot to us, because we are not living under Levitical law, but remember they were living under Levitical law, and therefore this was a question that a man interested in theology would surely have asked sooner or later. What happens when holy meat in the folds of a garment touches things that are unholy? Does the holiness of the meat communicate itself to the unholiness? That's the first question, and an interesting question it would have been for one who lived under that system.

Let's look now, at B. in our outline, the second question, verse 13, “Then Haggai said, after the priests have answered, and said, will it become holy? The answer was, no. Then Haggai said, if one who is unclean from a corpse.” Now, remember it was very, very bad to touch a dead body. Of course I have always thought to do that anyway, but nevertheless [Laughter] it was very bad in Levitical circles to touch a dead body, because a dead body was considered to be ceremonially unclean. Now, for us who live in this dispensation, a dead body is not ceremonially unclean, but they lived under a system of ceremony in order that they might be taught certain important spiritual truths.

Now, the question then is if one who is unclean from a corpse, touches any of these, will the latter become unclean. In other words, a person who has become unclean by the touching of a corpse, if he touches something else, will that be defiled by touch of the person who is unclean, and the answer is, yes. Or, “It will become unclean.” Well,

now these answers are very clear, very direct and very correct, just and just as I said, just what you might expect from a person who was supposed to know the law.

Now, if you turn over a few pages to the prophecy of Malachi, and look at chapter 2 verse 7, you will see why the priests will be expected to know these things. Malachi says, “For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge and men souls seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” So it was the priest who taught the word of God. He was the messenger of the Lord of hosts. Men should seek instruction from the mouth of the priest in the Levitical economy. They didn’t go to the prophet primarily. He went to the priest. The priest was the interpreter of the music turah. The Mosaic Law, so it was they who understood the Scriptures. It was they who were the equivalent of the scribes and lawyers of the New Testament time. So they were supposed to understand, and here they have replied correctly.

Now, the answers I say are clear and to the point, and what are the conclusions? Let me just put them in the form of two statements. It’s not in the outline. First, the first question let’s us know that holiness is not transferable. Holiness is not transferable. In other words if the holy meat in the folds of the garment should touch something the holiness is not transferred. Holiness is not transferable.

Now, the second lesson that we learn from the second question, make application of this in a moment, is that unholiness is transferable. Now, that’s an interesting thing. Holiness is not transferable. Unholiness is transferable. Well, what do we learn from this? Well, we learn first of all that evil is more catching than good.

Now, that’s what you expect with a humanity that has fallen in sin, and as a result of the fact that we are fallen in sin, we are susceptible to evil, and we are not susceptible to holiness. Evil tends to spread in our midst. Holiness is an individual kind of thing and does not spread.

Now, to put it in the kind of language that we all can understand, let’s take a good apple, and a barrel of rotten apples. Now, what will happen if we take a good apple and

throw that good apple into a barrel of rotten apples? Now, you know exactly what will happen. All those rotten apples will become beautiful, nice, good apples, [Laughter] as a result of that good apple that is thrown in their midst. No, of course not. You know that it will not be long before the good apple is also rotten. Holiness is not transferable.

Take clean water in a vase, or a vase, [Laughter] and then take some unclean water and put it in the clean water. Why you know that of course that immediately that water has become unclean. Take a glass or a vase full of unclean water, and put some clean water in it. Will it cleanse it? No, of course not. It too will become unclean.

Now, we know it in another way too. I can catch a cold from anyone, but it's impossible for me to catch the health of anyone. [Laughter] Now, these are principles that illustrate what we are talking about. Educators and parents often make a very stupid decision. They have a child they cannot control, so they say, “Well, what shall we do with our child. We cannot control the child. Let's send him to a Christian school.” [Laughter] The Christianity will rub off on the child. So that holiness will be communicated to the unholy. Everyone who has ever been around a Christian school knows what will happen. That bad apple in the midst of those good apples, pretty soon all of those good apples, relative goodness mind you, relative goodness, they'll be rotten too. But this is the kind of reasoning that so many parents and educators engage in. It's pitiful. These poor Christian schools have to deal with some of the most incorrigible brats that you have ever seen because their parents will not take care of them at home, will not exercise discipline. And the same principle incidentally applies to the Sunday school too, in a more limited way. I don't want to step on anybody's toes here, so I won't say anymore, just put the youth in a good atmosphere and the influence of good association will make them good. Nonsense. So in other words then truth is not caught, but it comes by virtue of regeneration and faith, and divine transformation.

Well, these are two interesting questions. Now, let's see what Haggai is going to do by applying them to his audience. And especially to the nation, so we read now, the application of the instruction in verse 14 through verse 19,

“Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean. But now, do consider from this day and onward, (And I commented on the fact that consider is one of the characteristic words of Haggai in the first message, but there is a slight difference in the construction and the last few references to consider in this book are references that are good references, references in which consideration is made with a view to aiding them to understand spiritual truth, whereas the first were considerations that were designed to lead them to recognize the way in which they have disobeyed the Lord. Verse 15,) But now, do consider from this day onward before a one stone was place on another in the temple of the LORD: From that time, when one came to a grain heap of twenty measures, there would be only ten: and when one came to the wine vat for to draw fifty measures there would be only twenty. I smote you and every work of your hands with blasting wind, mildew and hail yet you did not come back to me, declares the LORD. (That's the first consideration, now notice the second.) Do consider now from this day and onward, from the twenty fourth day of the ninth month, from the day when the temple of the LORD's was founded, consider. Is the seed still in the barn? Even including the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree, it has not born fruit.”

Now, we'll stop at that point. Now, we are going to apply the teaching that is Haggai is going to apply the teaching. He has asked two questions. He has received two answers that are correct, and essentially it is this holiness is not transferable, unholiness is transferable, just as we read in 1 Corinthians chapter 5, a little leavens the lump. We

don't read a little lump lumps the leaven. But a little leaven leavens the lump, so now Haggai is going to apply them. And you can tell he's going to apply by the use of the word so. Look verse 14, “Then Haggai answered and said, so is this people.” In other words, he's been trying to illustrate their condition by these two questions, and so is this nation. The second time he's used so, “And so is every work of their hands, and what they offer there is unclean.” Three times he likens the nation, and their work to the truth that is revealed by the questions that he has asked and the answers that have been given.

Now, what he does is to apply the instruction first to the fifteen years, and notice the outline, A. To the fifteen years. That is from the time when they began the work and halted the work of rebuilding the temple, until the time they took it up again, and then he will apply it to the three months, when they began and the present time in December. So first of all, he will apply the teaching to the fifteen years. In verses 14 and 17 he does that, and the point that he makes is simply this, that unholiness is communicated, and as a result of the unholiness of the people everything that they did during that period of time was unholy in the sight of the Lord.

What did they do in the mean time? Well, they came back to the land. They came back to rebuild the temple. They started to build it. They had little problem with the Samaritans and they laid down their tools, and forgot all about it because they had a few problems. Perhaps as I mentioned they even didn't like the work so much. They had a good excuse to lay it down, and then they began to build their own lavish houses. What did they do in the mean time? Why no doubt they carried out their sacrifices. They did make their sacrifices as best they could. They had their own religious liturgy. They observed the feasts. They carried out the Levitical system, the best they could during that period of time, but they didn't do what God said that they had come back to do, and that was to rebuild the temple.

Now, that was disobedience, and what he is simply saying is the reason that you have been blasted with blasting wind and mildew and all of the other destruction during

the fifteen years. Back in chapter 1 remember he described it all, the reason that you had all that was because your unholiness was communicated to everything that you did, because you were disobedient to me, even your good works were good works of disobedience, even your religious works, were religious works of disobedience.

Now, the application to us today is obvious. When a man is out of the proper relationship to the Lord all of his religiosity, is worthless in the sight of God. He may attend the meetings, read the Scriptures, listen to the preaching, even stay awake during the preaching, but it's worthless if he is living in disobedience. If God has spoken concerning the Scripture to him, and he hasn't responded then the unholiness is communicated to everything that he does. See how important it is that we do the thing that God desires, and has commanded us to do. Pollution is communicated.

Now, this is beautifully illustrated in the book of Genesis, the book of Isaiah, the book of Romans, I say. I wish we had time to talk about this. Let me just talk generally about it. You remember that when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, and fell under the curse, not only did Adam fall under the curse, but also the earth fell under the curse. So that the unholiness of man was communicated to this world, in which he lived. One sin led to the curse, and the curse is communicated to the whole of creation. Genesis chapter 3 verse 17 through verse 19 spells out all of the details about the thorns and the thistles, and then in Isaiah, chapter 24 in the same kind of reference in the 5th verse of the 1st chapter of the little apocalypse, that great prophetic section of that book the same relationship is given. Sin leads to curse. In other words, evil communicates itself, and then remember the Apostle Paul argues this in Romans chapter 8 in verses 19 through verse 23, in which he speaks about the results of the sin of Adam in the creation. Let me just read the verses for you.

“For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it in hope: that the creation itself also will be set free from slavery to

corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”

What he says then is that the sin that Adam committed in the Garden of Eden has its influence in the creation itself, and actually today the whole creation is groaning and travailing together in pain.

Now, you don't hear it, but the groans are there. Even the creation itself waits, the apostle says, for the redemption of the sons of God, in order that the creation may enter into its deliverance from the bondage of corruption. Sin communicates unholiness to all that it touches, and as beautifully illustrated in sin in our present circumstances. One of the commentators has said, “We cannot pacify God or persuade him to ignore our negligence and sloth by the gift of money or by indulging in pious phraseology.”

Now, he said, in verse 15 and 16, “But now consider from this day onward before one stone was placed on another in the temple of the Lord from that time when one came to a grain heap of twenty measures there would be only ten (Fifty percentage wastage, or slippage or loss. What do you say? You don't say lossage, diminution. You don't say that either unless you are well educated.) [Laughter] From the time one came to a grain heap of twenty measures. [Laughter] (Don't look at me like that.) There would be only ten, and when one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures there would be only twenty.” Sixty percent. So what he is saying, as a result of the fact that you have not done what you should have done, all of your activities are affected by sin.

Now, this illustrates for us the fact that our circumstances often reveal to us the spiritual condition in which we are. Now, fortunately that's not always true. There are times when we suffer, not because we have sinned, but we suffer because God would desire to educate us. He would desire for us to grow. To become deeper in spiritual things, and sometimes he has to speak in that way to catch our attention, and occasionally

he does it. No one likes to pass through that kind of education by suffering, but nevertheless that is a possibility. But our other circumstances may also be telling us that we are out of the will of God, and the response of a Christian to the sufferings and trials of life, is according to Scripture to be exercised by them. That is to get down upon our knees before God and ask him, “Why has this come to me? Why am I experiencing this? Is it because I have offended Thee? Is it because I have sinned against Thee, or is it Lord that you want to teach me something more deeply of yourself?” Circumstances someone has said are the fingers of God. And it’s well to remember that.

Now, we have the second of the applications, and this to the three moths. Now, I won’t deal with the technical question that arises here. It doesn’t really affect the sense of it, and we are not trying to expound this in the technicalities. Let’s look at verse 18 and 19,

“Do consider from this day onward from the twenty fourth day of ninth month, from the day when the temple of the Lord was founded. (I assume that means was re-founded or that the foundation, which had been begun, was cleared away. That’s the way I understand it. I may be wrong there. The students of the Hebrew text differ on this point, but the point that I make in application is not affected by it.) Consider, is the seed still in the barn, even including the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree, it has not born fruit.”

So it’s been three months since they have begun to rebuild the temple in obedience to God and yet nothing has happened. And so evidentially they were thinking that they should have received blessing from God.

Now, they had to learn the second lesson. Now, the first lesson remember, is that holiness is not transferable. The next lesson they have to learn is that unholiness is transferable, and I turned that around. I should have said, unholiness is communicated,

and now they have to learn that holiness is not communicated. In other words they have obeyed the Lord and they have done his will. They have begun to rebuild the temple, but the prosperity has not come. So what? Well, the return to God does not undo immediately the results of former failure. Sin may be forgiven while the consequences may still be felt. It's entirely possible to use a very common illustration that a man may waste his body in alcoholism, and then after he has expended himself in the drinking of the liquid fire, he is converted. But his body may have suffered from the damage and punishment that he has subjected it to, and as a consequence while he soul has been delivered, and he has received everlasting life and has been justified, he may still have to suffer the consequences of some of the sin as it affected his body.

And so here it has been several months now, and no prosperity has come, and so they need to learn the lesson that holiness is not communicated. Sin may be forgiven. The consequences may still be felt. Salvation when it comes is salvation by grace, not by works. All they way through, and even in our Christian life we are not blessed because we obey. Let me repeat that. We are not blessed because we obey, as if our obedience gains merit for us before God. We are blessed by grace and our obedience when there does come obedience is a gracious gift of God in the Christian life. We affirm that the faith by which we believe in the Lord Jesus as the one who has died for sins is the gift of God.

Now, let me assure you that the faith, by which you believe the word of God and rely upon our Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit who lives within you, the faith by which you live your Christian life is itself and gift of God, so that not only is your salvation a work of grace, but your sanctification is a work of grace too. And you should never think because God has enabled you to obey something, that he blesses you because you have obeyed. Your obedience is because he has worked. So they had to learn that lesson, and therefore we come to the conclusion of the lesson. I have one minute and that's enough. In the last part of verse 19 he says, “Yet from this day, I will bless you.”

Now, what he means by that is that he is going to expend his inevitable grace upon them, and he promises what they could never do, receive blessing, and he will bless by divine fiat. Not, because they had a right to it. It will be unmerited favor, even in their obedient state. That illustrates the fact that we may turn to God in penitence, but we cannot demand anything by virtue of the fact that we have repented. God has no debtors, never has any debtor. Every blessing that we ever receive is a blessing of grace. We often sing, “Come Thou fount of every blessing. Tune my heart to sing Thy grace. Streams of mercy never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. Oh, to grace how great a debtor, daily I am constrained to be. Let that grace Lord like a feather bind my wondering heart to Thee.” That’s what God does in sanctification. That’s what Israel the remnant needed to come to understand. That’s what the prophet Haggai sought to teach them and us. Let’s bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these lessons that have come to us from the prophets of the Old Testament. And surely, Lord, they are relevant messages for us. Oh, God by thy grace bind our wondering hearts to Thee, and enable us to believe and trust. For the just live by faith. For Jesus’ sake. Amen.