

## BOOK OF HAGGAI

This book is the second shortest book in the Old Testament. This was written for the remnant of the Jews that had returned to Palestine. The first group of captives from Babylon led by Zerubbabel was tasked to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. After they started, the work stopped and remained unfinished for sixteen years, so Haggai was commissioned by God to exhort the Jews to get back to work and finish the job. Haggai expands his message to include a judgment on ungodly nations, as well as the future glory of God's people.

**Ministry: Haggai the Prophet** was a prophet who spoke to the Jews who had returned from their captivity in Babylon (Ezra 5:1) after Zerubbabel led the first group back from Babylon. He was chosen by God for the purpose of encouraging the people to rebuild the Temple. The key expression is, "I am with you, says the LORD" (1:13; 2:4). Other significant expressions are: "Consider your ways"(1:5,7; 2:15,18), and "Be strong" (2:4).

**Theme:** Put God first and He will restore and revive us.

**Time:** Haggai prophesied on three days in 520 B.C.

**Overview:** Haggai's prophecies on the first day (chapter 1) stirred up the leaders & people to continue to rebuild God's house. The 2nd prophecy (2:1-9) was given about 1 month after they had started to rebuild, to encourage them to keep rebuilding because God had glorious future plans for the temple (which were also prophecies of the last day church & the 2nd Coming of Christ). The prophecies on the 3rd day said (in 2:10-19) that the Lord would turn their financial curses into blessings because of their new obedience, and then also said (in 2:20-23) that God would judge the nations but would exalt Zerubbabel (prophetic of the coming Messiah).

### Outline

Haggai prophesied in a space of fifteen weeks during the second year of King Darius (Darius I). There were five recorded messages.

Part 1 Consider your ways and build the house of the Lord (1: 1-13).  
1<sup>st</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month

Part 2 The People respond to Build the Temple (1:14 – 15).  
24<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month

Part 3 The glory of the latter house will be greater than that of the former house (2: 1 – 19).  
21<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month

Part 4 From this day I will bless you (2:10 – 19).  
24<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month

Part 5 God will shake the heavens and the earth (2:20 – 23).  
24<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month

## **PART 1: Consider your ways and build the house of the Lord (1: 1-12).**

**1:1** Haggai and Zechariah prophesied in the second year of Darius, King of Persia (520 B.C.). Zerubbabel, the governor who was appointed by Cyrus to rule over Judah, and Joshua the High Priest were commissioned to lead the people back from Babylon and to rebuild the temple. Zerubbabel was in the royal lineage of David and Christ (Mt. 1:11-13).

Darius had 19 battles in the first two years of his reign before he finally established himself as king. This was a time of real turmoil in the Persian kingdom.

Satan did not want King Darius to succeed because he knew that this would allow the king to continue rebuilding the Temple. His main concern was to hinder the people of God from coming together. Thus, Satan always seeks the opportunity to create instability because instability creates an environment in which he can operate. For this reason, there will be great turmoil in governments in the last days.

**1:2** Because of the opposition from the Samaritans, the people of God were discouraged and thought that it was not the Lord's timing to rebuild. That too is often the reaction of the people of God to opposition. Instead of being steadfast to do what the Lord wants them to do, they always think that it is not the time for His will to be established. They end up discouraged, disheartened, and then delay the work of God.

We need to persevere in prayer until we see God's will accomplished. Though there are many oppositions, these do not mean that the plan of God cannot be achieved. If God commissions us to do something, we can be sure that there will be opposition from the enemy. If God asks us to do something for Him, then He will give us the faith to produce the finances and the resources to carry out His plans.

**1: 3 – 6** - The Lord reproved the people of Judah for the delay in rebuilding the Temple, while they themselves were living comfortably in their paneled houses. When they neglect the Lord's house, they suffered hunger, thirst and poverty. The Lord told them to consider their ways, and why they had not prospered during this time. God's people should give abundantly toward the work of the Lord, and they will see the overflowing blessings from the Lord upon their lives.

**1: 7 – 9** - As long as the house of the Lord lay in ruin, they could expect nothing but drought. God brought economic disaster upon the people who returned to Jerusalem because they were not building the house of the Lord. They had always thought first of their own personal desires rather than putting God first in their lives. Ministers and servants of the Lord should put God's will first before any other things. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Proverbs 24:27 explains the importance of taking care of our field before we build our house.

**1: 10 – 11** - The people of Judah suffered an economic crisis because of their negligence. Though they received the mandate from the Lord to build the temple, and yet they continued to ignore the command. The Lord allowed them to go through this crisis so that they would turn to Him and cry out with all of their hearts to God. Many times in our lives, the Lord brings us into similar difficult situations so that we too will cry out to Him for improvement.

**1: 12 - 13** - Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, Joshua the High Priest, and all the remnant of the people, responded to the rebuke of God and feared Him. As a result the Lord gave them a word of comfort and encouragement in verse 13. Haggai's message from God in verse 13 was a main message of the prophet- if we will turn to the Lord, He will turn to us. He will be with us if we will obey His voice and put His work first.

## **PART 2 The people respond to build the temple (1:14 – 15).**

1:14 - 15 - The message of the prophet (v. 13) was used by God to stir up in their cold hearts a renewed desire for doing His will. The result is that twenty-three days after the command to rebuild, the builders begin working again with renewed energy. In Psalm 69:9, God wants us to stir up our hearts to do the work that He has purposed in our lives. The zeal of God should consume us so that we will not rest until the will of God is not accomplished. In Psalm 132:3-5, David had tremendous zeal for the work of the Lord. We, too, should pray to God that we receive the same zeal to see the work of the Lord completed.

We also read in verse 14 that the leaders of the Jews responded and helped start the rebuilding. The key to success is often godly leaders. Therefore, we should pray the prayer of Jeremiah 3:15, that God will give us pastors and leaders according to His heart who will feed us with knowledge and understanding.

## **PART 3 The glory of the latter house will be greater than that of the former house (2: 1 – 19).**

**2: 1 – 3** - Haggai's second message ("Be strong ... and work," v. 4). About a month later, in the seventh month, the people had become discouraged with the new building, when they thought about the great glory of the former temple. The old men wept because they had seen Solomon's temple, and the restored temple could not compare to the glory of Solomon's temple. However, the young men rejoiced because they had now a temple. They had nothing to compare it to because they had not seen the glory of the former the temple.

The restoration of the temple had brought gladness to the young men, but sadness to the older men who had experienced the greater presence and glory of the Lord when Solomon's temple was built. This applies to the Church age as well. How God has worked in the Church during recent centuries since the Reformation Era under Martin Luther, has not been as great and glorious as the power and glory of the Lord in the New Testament Church era.

**2: 4 – 5** - The leaders were told to "Be strong" and not to fear because the Spirit of God remained in them. In Isaiah 59:21, "My Spirit who is upon you," brings us the same message today. We should make a covenant with God asking for His Spirit to always remain upon us. Similarly, the same Spirit of God who launched the church into existence as His people continues to be with them. The One who provided the special empowerment for the church's past offers us the same empowerment today and tomorrow.

**2: 6 – 7** - "It is a little while" shows how clear and certain this event is for God. Haggai 2:6 is quoted in Hebrews 12:26 – 28. To a certain extent, this happened when the temple was rebuilt.

**2: 8 – 9** - These two verses have two main fulfillments and applications: a literal, natural application and a spiritual application. Abraham has two seeds: a natural seed (Israel) and a spiritual seed (Church). Nearly all the promises made to Israel have a fulfillment in the Church since the Church is the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). All true believers in Christ are the Israel of God (Gal. 3:29). Also, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-27, 6:19).

Literally, this verse applies to the building of the Millennial Temple that Ezekiel saw and described in his book (Ezek. 40-48). The Latter House (Millennial Temple) will be more glorious than the Former House (Solomon's Temple).

The spiritual application of this verse is that the glory of the Last Day Church will be greater than that of the Early Church. There are many verses and prophecies that confirm this, including Joel 2:28-29. In the last days, the Church will experience the latter rain outpouring of God's Spirit.

The Church will experience great glory in the last days. Isaiah 60:1-2 has a prophetic application for the Church. The Lord will return for a glorious Church, a Bride without spot or wrinkle, as seen in Ephesians 5:27 and Rev.19:7-8.

#### **PART 4 From this day I will bless you (2:10 – 19).**

**2: 10 – 14** Haggai's third message ("I will bless you," v. 18) comes approximately two months after the second message. Even though the Jews had returned to the Promised Land, they were still spiritually unclean. They did not walk in righteousness before the Lord. This was a reminder to the people that their offerings to God were polluted and that they themselves were unclean as long as the temple was in ruin.

**2: 15 – 17** – Before they had started building the temple, they had experienced shortages of grain and wine, and their crops had suffered blight, mildew and hail. The whole purpose of Israel's troubles was to bring them back to the Lord. Even after they returned to Jerusalem, they were not fully committed to serving the Lord. Instead of building God's house, they were more concerned about building their own houses. Even after all God had done for them, they still refuse to follow the Lord with all their hearts.

**2: 18 – 19** - The Lord is saying that the Jews were unclean because they disobeyed His decree to build the temple. However, because they repented and rebuilt the temple, God promised to bless them. When we put the work of the Lord first, it releases the blessing of God upon our lives.

#### **PART 5 God will shake the heavens and the earth (2:20 – 23).**

**2: 20 – 22** – Zerubbabel was in the royal line of David, and would have been on the throne if Jerusalem had not been overthrown; but there was another ruler, the King of Persia, and Zerubbabel lost his rights to the throne of Judah.

**2:23** The Lord here gives a promise to Zerubbabel. Though the earthly kingdom was not given during his lifetime, God promised him that he will reign in the Millennium. Many of the God's promises are not fulfilled in our lifetime, but they will be fulfilled in the future either during Christ's Millennial reign on earth or in the New Heavens and New Earth.

Zerubbabel is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. God would overthrow and destroy this world's Gentile kingdoms and set up Christ's Millennial Kingdom. The signet ring indicates that the divine authority to rule is committed to the Messiah.