

HAGGAI

Haggai (“Festival” – Ezra 5:1; 6:14) might be an abbreviation of a longer name “Haggiah” (1 Chronicles 6:30) which means “Festival of the Lord.” Haggai’s ancestry is not recorded; however, Jerome assumes that Haggai is a priest because of Haggai 2:10-19. The Jewish Scribes who translated the Septuagint attribute several of the Psalms to Haggai and Zechariah (Psalms 111, 112, 138, 146, 147, 148).

Haggai may have seen Solomon’s Temple (Haggai 2:3) before it was destroyed in 586BC by the Babylonians. Haggai’s single purpose was to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

This Book of Haggai follows the Babylonian Captivity which had lasted 70 years, so that the land of Israel might fulfill the Sabbaths (years of rest) that had been missed (Leviticus 26:34 & 43 – Jeremiah 25:12, 29:10, Ezra 36:21, Exodus 23:11)

The Israelites returned to Jerusalem in order to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:5); however, only the foundation had been laid (Ezra 3:8-11). Sheshbazzar had constructed the foundation (Ezra 5:16) followed by Zerubbabel building some of the Temple (Ezra 3:8-13).

Sixteen years passed before Haggai encouraged Israel’s remnant to be revived and to persevere – every church building campaign might begin with the reading of Haggai.

Outline of Haggai		
Haggai 1:1-15	First Sermon	Conviction – Wrong Priorities
Haggai 2:1-9	Second Sermon	Courage – God’s Presence & Peace
Haggai 2:10-19	Third Sermon	Cleanliness – Defilement & Impurity
Haggai 2:20-23	Fourth Sermon	Sovereign King & Signet Ring

“The Almighty” (“Lord of Hosts”) is used more than 80 times in the short books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Haggai worked with Zechariah (Zechariah 8:9).

The “Word of the Lord” is recorded coming to Haggai five times (Haggai 1:1, 3, 2:1, 10, 20).

Captivity and Restoration of Jerusalem		
606-586 BC	Israel taken to Babylon	
536 BC	50,000 Jews return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel	
536 BC	7 th Month (Oct)	Israelites Build Altar and Offer Sacrifice
535 BC	2 nd Month (May)	Work on the Temple Begins, but is Stopped
520 BC	6 th Month (Sept), 1 st Day	Haggai’s Call to Build
	6 th Month (Sept), 24 th Day	Building Begins
	7 th Month (Oct), 21 st Day	Haggai’s Second Appeal
	8 th Month (Nov)	Zechariah’s Opening Address
	9 th Month (Dec), 24 th Day	Haggai’s 3 rd & 4 th Appeals
	11 th Month (Feb), 24 th Day	Zechariah’s Visions

518 BC	9 th Month (Dec), 4 th Day	Zechariah's Visions
516 BC	12 th Month (Mar), 3 rd Day	Temple is Completed
457 BC	Ezra comes to Jerusalem and makes reforms	
444 BC	Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall (Period of Malachi)	

25 Haggai 1-2

Read Haggai 1:1-6 ... Haggai Chastised the People for Neglecting the Temple

1:1 Darius reigned in Persia from 522 – 486BC and is the only Gentile King mentioned in the opening verses by the prophets concerning which king was reigning.

- Darius means “investigation” which is key to Haggai → “Consider your ways” is mentioned five times in four verses (Haggai 1:5, 7, 2:15, 18).
- Haggai addresses the civil and religious leaders in Zerubbabel (“Seed of Babylon”) of Shealtiel (“I have asked God”) and Joshua (“Jehovah is Salvation”) of Jehozadek (“Jehovah is Righteous”).
 - Zerubbabel is identified as the son of Shealtiel in Ezra 3:2, 8; 5:2, Nehemiah 12:1, Matthew 1:12, and Luke 3:27 in the genealogy of Jesus.
 - Zerubbabel was also identified as the son of Shealtiel’s brother, so he may have been adopted within the family (1 Chronicles 3:19)
- Throughout this book Zerubbabel symbolizes the Lord Jesus as King while Joshua (“Yeshua”) represents Jesus Christ as High Priest.
 - Joshua was a “Zadok” Priest as the grandson of Seraiah who was the High Priest when Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:18-21; 1 Chronicles 6:14)
 - Zadok (“Zedek” means “righteous”), and Melchizedek’s name (Malki-Tzedek מֶלְכִי־צְדָק) is translated “king of righteousness” (Genesis 14:17-19; Hebrews 7:10)
 - Zadok was continually faithful to the rightful King even in the millennium (Ezekiel 40:46) - King David versus insurrection of Absalom (2 Samuel 15:24-36; 2 Samuel 17:15, 2 Samuel 17:17-21) then Solomon versus Adonijah (1 Kings 1:8, 1 Kings 1:26, 1 Kings 1:32-45). After Absalom died, Zadok was also an intermediary preparing Judah for the rightful King’s return (2 Sam 19:11).
 - The faithful priests from their ancestor Zadok would be allowed to serve as well as have close fellowship to God (Ezekiel 40:46, 44:15, 48:11).
 - Zadok’s lineage descended from Aaron through Phinehas (Ezra 7:2-5) who received an eternal covenant of peace from God because of his zeal for the Lord (Numbers 25:10-13).
- The first day of the month was the “new moon” festival celebrated in the Jewish lunar calendar.

New Moon Festivals of the Old Testament
Numbers 10:10; 28:11-15
1 Samuel 20:5

2 Kings 4:23
Ezra 3:5
Isaiah 1:13-14
Ezekiel 46:1-6
Hosea 1:13
Amos 8:5
Colossians 2:16

1:2 God usually references Israelites as “My people,” but here He says “These people.” The term “these people” is used several times in a derogatory way (Isaiah 6:9-10; 8:6; 28:11, 14)

- The Lord of Hosts is a military title that describes the Lord as the Commander of the Heavenly armies, and it is repeated 12 times in the Book of Haggai.
- Recorded in Ezra, there were enemies of Israel (Samaritans, Arabians, people from Ashdod) that stopped the construction of the Temple (Ezra 4:6); however, beyond the enemies, Haggai calls out the apathy of God’s people.

1:3 As with the other prophets, Haggai shared the Word of the Lord instead of his own opinion.

1:4 Israelites were living in “paneled homes” (comfort) while God’s Temple was in ruins.

1:5-7 The phrase “*consider your ways*” in the literal Hebrew translation is “put your heart on your roads” which concerned thinking about your ways/motives and where they will lead.

- The times had been difficult, but the reason that God’s people were so challenged was because their priorities were misaligned.

Consider Your Ways <i>(Haggai 1:5-7 → Micah 6:14-15)</i>	
1 Planted Much	Harvested Little
2 Eat	Never Satisfied
3 Drink	Never Even Have Enough to Get Drunk
4 Dress in Clothing	Never Warm
5 Saves Income	Loses Wealth in Saving/Investment
Only God Can Bring to Fruition <i>(Ps 39:6, 44:3, 104:27, 127:2; Prov 14:12, 16:25, 23:4; Is 9:20, 55:2; Jer 5:24-25; Hosea 4:10; Amos 8:5-6; John 1:23, 14:6)</i>	

Read Haggai 1:8-11 ... God’s Discipline of the Remnant for Neglecting the Temple

1:8 God’s people were told to 1. Go 2. Bring 3. Build (Heb 3:6; Eph 2:19-22).

- God must be pleased before being glorified – it doesn’t matter about religious rituals until daily lives please Him first.
- Prior to captivity, Israel had committed idolatrous practices under the trees on the high places (Deuteronomy 12:2; 1 Kings 14:23). God directed His people to cut down the trees and bring them as lumber for His Temple.
- The Hebrew word “kaved” (כבד) is used for “glorify” or “honor”, but it also means to “make heavy” or “give importance” (Job 14:21; Isaiah 66:5)

1:9 & 2:17 Make no mistake, God caused the failure of God’s people who did not prioritize God’s way above worldly interests. (Isaiah 45:7)

1:10 God had forewarned Israel that if they disobeyed, he would withhold rain from them. (Deuteronomy 11:13-17)

1:11 Prior to the Babylonian captivity, Israel had committed idolatry on the high places in order to drive fertility for the land as well as offspring, so the returned remnant had a choice to obey God or revert to idolatry to pursue rain.

- Grain, wine and oil were primary crops of Palestine (Deuteronomy 11:14; Ezekiel 27:17; Hosea 2:8, 22)

The Lord Had Withheld Rain From... (Haggai 1:11)	
1.	The Land
2.	The Hills
3.	The Grain
4.	The New Wine
5.	The Oil
6.	What the Ground Brings Forth
7.	Man
8.	Beast
9.	All of Their Labors

Read Haggai 1:12-15 ... The Remnant Obediently Complete the Temple

1:12 All three elements of society obeyed God: 1. Zerubbabel (Political) 2. Joshua (Religious) 3. Entire Remnant (Populous)

- The first response of Israel was that they feared (wayyîr’û וַיִּירְאוּ) the Lord (2 Chronicles 15:2).
- The returning remnant understood the might and power of God while today’s society doesn’t even believe that He exist.

Scriptural Occurrences of “Fear” (wayyîr’û וַיִּירְאוּ)	
Genesis 20:8	Egypt’s King Abimelech dreams of demise after harboring Sarai
Genesis 43:18	Joseph’s brothers when asked to dine with him as ruler of Egypt
Exodus 14:10	Israel on the coast of the Red Sea begin pursued by Egypt
Exodus 14:31	Israel’s fear of the Lord after He parted the Red Sea
Exodus 34:30	Israel’s fear of Moses whose face glowed after Mount Sinai
Joshua 10:2	Adonizedek, king of Jerusalem, against the power of Gibeon
1 Samuel 17:24	The response of Israel’s warriors to Goliath
2 Kings 17:7	Israel had feared the false gods of Egypt & surrounding nations
Psalms 64:9	Mankind should fear God
Psalms 65:8	Inhabitants of the earth marvel at God’s creation & power over nature
Jonah 1:5	The sailors carrying Jonah were afraid of the storm
Jonah 1:10	The sailors were afraid when Jonah stated that he rebelled against God
Jonah 1:16	The sailors feared the Lord when the sea and the storm calmed
Haggai 1:12	Israel’s Post-Babylon returning remnant who had not built Temple

1:13 The people are reassured after their repentance that God is with them.

- Man’s effort is required for blessing, but when God’s people obey, it is God Who carries their work to fruition (Philippians 2:12-13).

- The great “I Am” was with them; God’s covenant name (Yahweh – Exodus 3:14) came from the Hebrew word for “I Am” (’ānî אֲנִי).
 - God’s glory had departed from the Temple (Ezekiel 10), but now God’s presence (shekinah glory) was promised to His people. God is called “Immanuel” meaning “God with us.”
- 1:14 The Spirit first spoke through Haggai, and the people were receptive to the message. Once Israel’s returning remnant received the Lord’s message (Haggai 1:12), He sent His Spirit.
- God’s Spirit stirred the political leader (Zerubbabel), the religious leader (Joshua), and then all of the people (Haggai 2:5)
- 1:15 The time had been 3 weeks and 3 days since the opening of the chapter. The Israelites may have been collecting the materials for construction (Haggai 1:8).

Read Haggai 2:1-9 ... The Coming Glory of the Temple

- 2:1 One month had passed since chapter 1 which would have been the last day of the 8-day Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:39-42).
- 2:2 Haggai is called to speak to the three audiences that the Lord’s Spirit had stirred up (Haggai 1:14). Haggai would speak to the political leader (Zerubbabel), the religious leader (Joshua), and then all of the people (Haggai 2:5)
- 2:3 Although the Temple had begun being reconstructed, it was not very grand compared to its glory before its destruction (Ezra 3:10-13), but although the Temple is outwardly less attractive, God promises more glory after reconstruction (Haggai 2:9)
- Some of Israel’s returning remnant were old enough to have seen Solomon’s Temple (Ezra 3:12). Some of these elderly men were discouraged in the comparison of the two structures; however, the Lord’s Spirit would perform great work in spite of the humble structure.
 - This may be a Messianic reference to the coming Messiah from Nazareth
- 2:4 God tells the political, the religious, and the people to work and not fear because His Spirit is with them (Eph 6:10).
- There are four imperatives in this verse: “Take Courage” is repeated three times, and then “Work.”
 - A recurring message of Joshua was for the people to have courage (Joshua 1:6-7, 18)
- 2:5 The Lord vows His presence as He had covenanted with their ancestors that God had brought out of Egyptian slavery into the Promised Land; God would now be with those He brought out of the Babylonian captivity into the Promised Land.
- Throughout the Exodus, God’s Spirit represented God’s presence. (Numbers 11:17, 25, 29; Isaiah 63:11, 14).
- 2:6 This verse is the only quote from Haggai in the New Testament which can be found in Hebrews 12:26. This sets the foundation for a Messianic meaning (Haggai 2:21); as God had shaken the nations, He would once again shake the nations when the Messiah came.
- 2:7 The Gentile nations would contribute monetarily with the rebuilding of the Temple.
- 2:8 “Redemption” (“silver”) and “glory” (“gold”) belong to the Lord.

- 2:9 The glory of this humbler Temple would be greater than Solomon's former Temple because God's presence established the glory – not the size or ornamentation of the edifice.
- Spirit-filled Bible studies may contain more of God's glory than a mega-church built and sustained by man's efforts.
 - The Hebrew word for "peace" is "shalom" (שָׁלוֹם); this might refer to the coming Messiah (Jesus) as the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

Read Haggai 2:10-19 ... Sin Hinders the Work of God

- **Israel's returning remnant once again considered themselves as beyond the consequences of sin because they were doing the work of the Lord in the Promised Land.**
- 2:10 This would have been 3 months since the beginning of construction at the conclusion of chapter 1.
- 2:11 Haggai is commanded to ask the Priests about the Mosaic Law (Torah).
- 2:12 The Priests were given parts of the sacrifices to eat (Exodus 29:37; Ezekiel 44:19).
- Jesus taught on true holiness in the New Testament (Matthew 23:19).
- 2:13 While the Temple (or other sacred elements) cannot make a person holy (Rom 8:8), that which is defiled in this world can pollute something which is holy (Mt 23:27).
- Impurity is transferrable while holiness is not.
 - The Mosaic Law documented that touching a corpse would make a person ceremonially unclean (Leviticus 22:4; Numbers 5:9, 19:2).
 - The corpse can allude to being "dead to the old self" but elements of this old self can still defile (Rom 8:10; Eph 2:1; Col 2:13)
- 2:14 Haggai continued to enlighten the priests that world events are under the sovereign control of God. Israel's returning remnant offered work and effort that had been polluted by sin.
- 2:15 Israel's inhabitants pursued self-indulgence instead of constructing God's Temple.
- 2:16 Whether wheat or wine, when the inhabitants realized half (or less) of what they had labored and stored.
- 2:17 God ruined Israel's harvests as an act of restoration, so that they would turn to Him, but they did not.
- 2:18 Since Israel's remnant had obediently begun to rebuild the Temple, God told the priests to make note of this day as the beginning of blessing from the Lord.
- The people had worked for three months on constructing the Temple before this word from the Lord.
- 2:19 Just as God punished His people, in spite of the lack of fruit - He now had plans to bless them.

Read Haggai 2:20-23 ... Zerubbabel as the Prophetic Signet Ring

- **This is a Messianic and Eschatological portion of Haggai**
- **Zerubbabel symbolized the Coming King as the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7) was reestablished.**
- **Zerubbabel was in the line of Jesus to fulfill the Davidic Covenant (Matthew 1:12; Luke 3:27)**

2:20 On the same day, that God called Haggai to tell the priests that He would bless them (Haggai 2:10), God also called Haggai to speak to the Governor Zerubbabel as the coming Messiah.

- Zerubbabel as Governor (Jesus as King) is mentioned because at this point Jesus' work as Priest will be completed.

2:21 God has twice (witness) mentioned that he will shake heaven and earth (Haggai 2:6). There was an earthquake at the crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 28:2), and there will be an earthquake at His second coming (Ezekiel 38:19; Revelation 16:18-21)

2:22 The "shaking of the earth" meant that Gentile powers and authorities would be overthrown and subdued as the Gentiles are turned to worship the one true King.

2:23 Zerubbabel is in the lineage of Jesus (Mt 1:12-13; 1 Chron 3:19)

- Jesus was God's signet ring representing the authentication and authority of royalty (Jeremiah 22:24).
- Zerubbabel is called "my servant" by God which was also true of the Messiah (Isaiah 41:8; 42:1; 49:5-6; 50:10; 52:13; 53:11).
- "*I have chosen you*" speaks of the election of the Messiah (1 Kinga 11:13; 1 Chronicles 28:4; Nehemiah 9:7; Psalm 135:4; Zechariah 1:17).
- Haggai was encouraging the civil and religious authorities as well as the people, that they should continue to faithfully rebuild the Temple, and God would faithfully fulfill the Davidic Covenant with the coming of the Messiah.