



Haggai

The people have abandoned the work of restoring God's temple in Jerusalem, and so Haggai takes them to task.

Author: Haggai, contemporary of Zechariah.

In Haggai – Jesus is the One Who Restores our Worship

Haggai 2:8 "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord."



TEACHER: 2 CHAPTERS

According to Haggai 2:3 we may safely assume that Haggai was alive to see Solomon's Temple when Judah was forced into the Babylonian captivity, and had seen its heartbreaking destruction. If that is the case, he had to be in his 70's or 80's when this prophesy was given. Cyrus, the king of Persia, conquers Babylon and issues a decree allowing Israel to return and rebuild the Temple in 538 B.C. 50,000 Jews made the journey home and began the work to restore what had been destroyed. They would take 2 years to clear the rubble and lay the foundations for the 2nd Temple. Then, when surrounding nations and people started to fear a united and restored Israel, the work was stopped. Most of this opposition came from the Samaritans, which would drive a wedge between them and the Jews that was still painful over 500 years later when Jesus talked with the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4. When Cyrus died, Darius became King of Persia. Darius was somewhat of a cosmopolitan, and loved the world's religions, especially those within his realm. The foundation of the Temple would lay bare from 536 B.C. until 522 B.C. when Darius took over Persia. Zerubbabel was the Governor of the people of Israel, and is always mentioned together with Joshua the High Priest. These 2 men were a great team, and served the Lord together with gusto.

The Jews had lost some of their zeal during the down time, and had repaired homes and markets, and now became satisfied with the status quo. That is where this book, and the prophet Haggai comes in. This book comes in after the time the foundations are laid, and before the work on the actual Temple itself is started, and continues during the re-construction. This Temple would be very modest compared to Solomon's Temple, but God encourages them that it will eventually be the world's heart's desire. Zerubbabel would also etch his name in history. He was a direct descendant of King David. He is mentioned 2 times in the New Testament as the ancestor of Christ. Both through Mary, and Joseph. By 516 B.C. the Temple is completed and dedicated (Ezra 6). So in our minds eye, let's go back to the foundations laying unfinished, in chapter one.

CH. 1

STUDENT:

During the second year that Darius was emperor of Persia, on the first day of the sixth month, the LORD spoke through the prophet Haggai. The message was for the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and for the High Priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak.

²The LORD Almighty said to Haggai, “These people say that this is not the right time to rebuild the Temple.” ³The LORD then gave this message to the people through the prophet Haggai: ⁴“My people, why should you be living in well-built houses while my Temple lies in ruins? ⁵Don't you see what is happening to you? ⁶You have planted much grain, but have harvested very little. You have food to eat, but not enough to make you full. You have wine to drink, but not enough to get drunk on! You have clothing, but not enough to keep you warm. And workers cannot earn enough to live on. ⁷Can't you see why this has happened? ⁸Now go up into the hills, get lumber, and rebuild the Temple; then I will be pleased and will be worshiped as I should be. (GNT)

TEACHER:

The passage we just read starts out that it is mainly “to Zerubbabel, and Joshua.” There is enough blame for everybody. The government (Zerubbabel) and the church (Joshua). The result of the apathy in leadership, is apathy in civil life, and religious life. The Lord continues by pointing out, 1 step forward, 2 steps back. Israel was living “house poor.” **You are barely surviving, you don't even have the money to get drunk.** God continues in the next chapter by saying it isn't the economy, or someone else's fault. God said “I did it!”

STUDENT:

⁹“You hoped for large harvests, but they turned out to be small. And when you brought the harvest home, I blew it away. Why did I do that? Because my Temple lies in ruins while every one of you is busy working on your own house. ¹⁰That is why there is no rain and nothing can grow. ¹¹I have brought drought on the land—on its hills, grainfields, vineyards, and olive orchards—on every crop the ground produces, on people and animals, on everything you try to grow.” (GNT)

TEACHER:

The leadership and the people respond to the Lord. Listen, in the back of your mind, for the time frame.

STUDENT:

¹²Then Zerubbabel and Joshua and all the people who had returned from the exile in Babylonia, did what the LORD their God told them to do. They were afraid and obeyed the prophet Haggai, the LORD's messenger. ¹³Then Haggai gave the LORD's message to the people: “I will be with you—that is my promise.” ¹⁴The LORD inspired everyone to work on the Temple:

Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah; Joshua, the High Priest, and all the people who had returned from the exile.

They began working on the Temple of the LORD Almighty, their God, ¹⁵on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month of the second year that Darius was emperor. (GNT)



TEACHER:

Did you catch that? In verse 1, it was the 1st day of the 6th month. In verse 15, it was the 24th day of the 6th month. 21 days, from apathy, to guys lining up with shovels and hammers. Chapter 2 starts 1 month later.

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STUDENT:

On the twenty-first day of the seventh month of that same year, the LORD spoke again through the prophet Haggai. ² He told Haggai to speak to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, to Joshua, the High Priest, and to the people, and to say to them, ³ “Is there anyone among you who can still remember how splendid the Temple used to be? How does it look to you now? It must seem like nothing at all. ⁴ But now don’t be discouraged, any of you. Do the work, for I am with you. ⁵ When you came out of Egypt, I promised that I would always be with you. I am still with you, so do not be afraid. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

God encourages them because they are now working, but in their hearts, they can do the math, and know they aren’t building a temple like Solomon’s. God wants them to know, He is working too.

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STUDENT:

⁶ “Before long I will shake heaven and earth, land and sea. ⁷ I will overthrow all the nations, and their treasures will be brought here, and the Temple will be filled with wealth. ⁸ All the silver and gold of the world is mine. ⁹ The new Temple will be more splendid than the old one, and there I will give my people prosperity and peace.” The LORD Almighty has spoken. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Now fast forward just over 2 months. God wants them to raise their standards.

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STUDENT:

¹⁰ On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the second year that Darius was emperor, the LORD Almighty spoke again to the prophet Haggai. ¹¹ He said, “Ask the priests for a ruling on this question: ¹² Suppose someone takes a piece of consecrated meat from a sacrifice and carries it in a fold of his robe. If he then lets his robe touch any bread, cooked food, wine, olive oil, or any kind of food at all, will it make that food consecrated also?”

When the question was asked, the priests answered, “No.”

¹³ Then Haggai asked, “Suppose someone is defiled because he has touched a dead body. If he then touches any of these foods, will that make them defiled too?”

The priests answered, “Yes.”

¹⁴ Then Haggai said, “The LORD says that the same thing applies to the people of this nation and to everything they produce; and so everything they offer on the altar is defiled.” (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Everyone in Israel is ritually unclean. God explains this is residual curse. Left over remnants from a time of Back-sliding. The good news is, it doesn’t last forever.

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STUDENT:

¹⁵ The LORD says, "Can't you see what has happened to you? Before you started to rebuild the Temple, ¹⁶ you would go to a pile of grain expecting to find twenty bushels, but there would be only ten. You would go to draw fifty gallons of wine from a vat, but find only twenty. ¹⁷ I sent scorching winds and hail to ruin everything you tried to grow, but still you did not repent. ¹⁸ Today is the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, the day that the foundation of the Temple has been completed. See what is going to happen from now on. ¹⁹ Although there is no grain left, and the grapevines, fig trees, pomegranates, and olive trees have not yet produced, yet from now on I will bless you." (GNT)

TEACHER:

The final word given to Haggai to close this book of prophesy. A prophesy I believe is concerning the rise of the Greeks, and then the Romans. A re-iteration of Daniels vision.

STUDENT:

²⁰ On that same day, the twenty-fourth of the month, the LORD gave Haggai a second message ²¹ for Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah: "I am about to shake heaven and earth ²² and overthrow kingdoms and end their power. I will overturn chariots and their drivers; the horses will die, and their riders will kill one another. ²³ On that day I will take you, Zerubbabel my servant, and I will appoint you to rule in my name. You are the one I have chosen." The LORD Almighty has spoken. (GNT)

NEXT LESSON ZECHARIAH

"The Lord inspired everyone to work on the Temple..."

Haggai 1:14

The picture below is a model of the 2nd Temple.



