

# ***Haggai***

## ***Rebuild the Temple!***

By Timothy Sparks  
TimothySparks.com

See also: Haggai Briefing by Tod Kennedy

# *Theme*

- God spoke through Haggai to Zerubbabel (governor) and to Joshua (high priest) and through them to all the people who had returned from Babylon
- The Lord addresses the 16-year lapse in the temple construction and then encourages the people to resume construction of the temple that the Babylonians had destroyed in 586 BC
- The Lord reminds the people that he would bless them in the future

# *The Name “Haggai”*

- Probably means “feast” or “festive” (joyous) or “festival” and may indicate Haggai was born during one of three important Jewish feasts: Unleavened Bread, Pentecost (or Weeks), or Tabernacles
- Ezra 5:1; 6:14

# ***Background***

- After conquering Babylon, Cyrus king of Persia issued a decree in 538 BC allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple
- Led by Zerubbabel, about 50,000 Jews returned and began work on the temple
- About two years later (536 BC) they completed the foundation (Ezra 3:8-11)

# ***Background***

- Their success aroused the Samaritans and other neighbors who feared the political and religious implications of a rebuilt temple in a thriving Jewish state
- They opposed the work vigorously and managed to halt work until 520 BC—after Darius the Great became king of Persia in 522 BC (Ezra 4:1-5, 24)

# ***Background***

- Haggai and Zechariah began to preach in Darius' second year, 520 BC
  - 1:1; Zech. 1:1
- The Jews were more to blame for their inactivity than their opponents and Haggai tried to arouse them from their lethargy

# ***Background***

- When Tattenai, the governor of Trans-Euphrates and other officials tried to interfere with the rebuilding efforts, Darius fully supported the Jews
  - Ezra 5:3-6; 6:6-12
- In 516 the temple was finished and dedicated
  - Ezra 6:15-18

# *Date*

- Haggai's messages are among the most carefully and precisely dated in the entire Old Testament
- They were given during a four-month period in 520 BC, the second year of King Darius
- The first message was delivered on the first day of the sixth month (Aug. 29), the last on the 24th day of the ninth month (Dec. 18)

# *Date*

(Nelson's Old Testament Survey)

- 1:1—the first day, sixth month, second year of Darius is Aug. 29, 520 BC
- 1:15—the twenty-fourth day, sixth month, second year of Darius is Sept. 21, 520 BC
- 2:1—the twenty-first day, seventh month, second year of Darius is Oct. 17, 520 BC

# *Date*

- 2:10—the twenty-fourth day, ninth month, second year of Darius is December 18, 520 BC
- 2:20—the twenty-fourth day, ninth month, second year of Darius is December 18, 520 BC—Haggai delivered a second message on this day

# ***Key Words & Phrases***

- **Says the Lord/Lord of hosts (15 times)**
  - 1:2, 5, 7-9, 13; 2:4, 6-9, 11, 14, 17, 23
- **House/temple (10 times)**
  - 1:2, 4, 8, 9, 14; 2:3, 7, 9, 15, 18
- **Consider (5 times)**
  - 1:5, 7; 2:15, 18
- **The word of the Lord (5 times)**
  - 1:1, 3; 2:1, 10, 20

# *Verses to Remember*

- 1:4
- 1:6, 9—Consequences of sin
  - Deut. 28:38-39
- 1:13 & 2:4—“I am with you” & “Be strong”
  - Josh. 1:6–7, 9, 18

# ***Outline by Chapter***

Ch. 1: The command & work on the temple

Ch. 2: The temple's glory & God's blessing

- 2:9, 19

# ***Outline of Four Messages***

- **1<sup>st</sup> Message: Rebuild the Temple (1:1–11)**
  - The people's lame excuse (1:1–4)
  - The people's poverty (1:5–6)
  - The reason God has cursed them (1:7–11)
- **Zerubbabel and the People Obey (1:12-15)**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Message: The Temple to Be Filled with Glory (2:1–9)**
  - The people encouraged (2:1–5)
  - The promise of glory and peace (2:6–9)

# ***Outline of Four Messages***

- **3<sup>rd</sup> Message: God Will Bless a Defiled People (2:10-19)**
  - Rapid spread of sin (2:10-14)
  - Poor harvests due to disobedience (2:15-17)
  - Blessing due to obedience (2:18-19)
- **4<sup>th</sup> Message: The Promise to Zerubbabel (2:20–23)**
  - Judgment of the Nations (2:20–22)
  - Significance of Zerubbabel (2:23)

# *Chapter 1*

- The Lord rebuked his people for giving more attention to details of their life than they gave serving the Lord by rebuilding the temple
- Their wrong priorities resulted in God withholding his blessings (1:2-11)
- Zerubbabel and Joshua obeyed God's message and the people changed their thinking from self-centeredness to fearing the Lord (1:12)

# ***Chapter 1***

- They all began work on the temple 24 days later (1:13-15)
  - This intervening three weeks may have been taken up gathering lumber for the work before it could start (1:8)
- Lesson: Put God first
- What is most important to us?
  - Fellowship with and service to God or spending time on the details of our lives?

# *Chapter 2*

- Less than a month later, the Lord gave a second message to Haggai for Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the returned remnant (2:1-2)
- The Lord asked if anyone was alive who had seen Solomon's temple which was destroyed 66 years earlier—and if the present building project seems “as nothing” (2:3)
  - 16 years earlier (536 BC), some wept—perhaps because the foundation was smaller than Solomon's temple (Ezra 3:12)

# *Chapter 2*

- The Lord tells them to take courage because “I am with you” (2:4)
- God had promised to go with the Hebrew people (Ex. 33:14) and that is still true, so they are not to fear (5)
- God promises to fill the temple with glory and it's glory will be greater than Solomon's temple (2:6-9)

# *Chapter 2*

- About 3 months after God's first message (1:1-11) God spoke to Haggai a third time (2:10)
- God warns that the people's sin harms the nation, the building of the temple and cuts off God's blessings (2:11-19)
- God concludes with a fourth message (2:20-23)
  - He will overthrow the rulers, the power and the military of nations worldwide and honor Zerubbabel (for his leadership and work)

# ***Lessons We Can Learn***

- Procrastination is the thief of time (1:2)
- Serve God now instead of doing what we might want to do—No excuses (1:2, 4, 5, 7)
- Are we in fellowship with God in obedience or are we carrying sin with us?
  - Sin defiles and destroys our work and only obedience to God and forgiveness by the blood of Christ cleanses us, makes us whole and our service acceptable to God

# *Trivia*

Can you fill in the blanks?

You have \_\_\_\_\_ much, and bring in \_\_\_\_\_;

You eat, but do not have \_\_\_\_\_;

You drink, but you are not filled with \_\_\_\_\_;

You clothe yourselves, but no one is \_\_\_\_\_;

And he who earns wages,

Earns wages to put into a \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_

1:6

# ***Memory Verse Review (Jonah—Zephaniah)***

- Jon. 3:2b—“Preach...”
- Mic. 7:18a—“Who is...”
- Nah. 1:3a—“The Lord is...”
- Hab. 2:4b—“The just...”
- Zeph. 2:3—“Seek the Lord...”

# ***Memory Verse for Haggai***

1:7

“Thus says the LORD of hosts:  
'Consider your ways!'”