

Book of Haggai

Study BIBLE



Introduction

Book No	37
Name	Haggai
Written By	Haggai
Testament	Old
Category	Minor Prophets
Date Written	Approx. 520 BC
Place Written	Jerusalem
Audience	To the people of Israel
Purpose	To call the people to complete the rebuilding of the Temple
History Covered	520 BC
Chapters	2
Verses	38
Key Verse	Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? (1:4)
Key People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Haggai ❖ Zerubbabel ❖ Jeshua
Key Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The temple ❖ Persia

Purpose of the Book

Our values and priorities are reflected in how we use our resources—time, money, strength, and talent. Often our actions belie our words. We say God is number one, but then we relegate him to a lesser number on our “to do” lists.

Twenty-five centuries ago, a voice was heard, calling men and women to the right priorities. Haggai knew what was important and what had to be done, and he challenged God’s people to respond.

In 586 B.C., the armies of Babylon had destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem—God’s house, the symbol of his presence. In 538 B.C. King Cyrus decreed that Jews could return to their beloved city and rebuild the Temple. So they traveled to Jerusalem and began the work. But then they forgot their purpose and lost their priorities, as opposition and apathy brought the work to a standstill (Ezra 4:4-5). Then Haggai spoke, calling them back to God’s values. “Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins?” (1:4). The people were more concerned with their own needs than with doing God’s will, and, as a result, they suffered.

Then Haggai called them to action: “This is what the LORD Almighty says: Consider how things are going for you! Now go up into the hills, bring down timber, and rebuild my house. Then I will take pleasure in it and be honored, says the LORD” (1:7-8). And God’s message through his servant Haggai became the catalyst for finishing the work.

Although Haggai is a small book, it is filled with challenge and promise, reminding us of God’s claim on our life and our priorities.

Haggai issues a clear call to his own people and to us that we should set ourselves to the task assigned to us by God. We should not allow difficulties, enemies, or selfish pursuits to turn us aside from our divinely given responsibilities. The noble nature of our calling and the promised presence of God and His Holy Spirit encourage us to fulfill our commission.

By emphasizing the cooperative roles of prophet, priest, prince, and people, Haggai also demonstrates the necessity for teamwork in carrying out God’s purposes on Earth.

As you read Haggai, imagine him walking the streets and alleys of Jerusalem, urging the people to get back to doing God’s work. And listen to Haggai speaking to you, urging you to reorder your priorities in accordance with God’s will. What has God told you to do? Put all else aside and obey him.

Overview

- ❖ 37th book of the BIBLE, Old Testament, 10th of the 12 minor prophets and 15th of the 17 prophetic books
- ❖ Haggai is second only to Obadiah in brevity among the books of the Old Testament.
- ❖ Haggai's name is mentioned 9 times in the book.
- ❖ Haggai is known only from this book as well as two references to him in the Book of Ezra.
 - Ezra 5:1
 - Ezra 6:14
- ❖ Haggai returned from Babylon with the remnant that returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel.
- ❖ Upon his return, he lived in Jerusalem.
- ❖ God used two prophets to urge the people to complete the construction of the Temple.
 - Haggai
 - Zechariah
- ❖ Darius (521-486 B.C.) was King of Persia during the time of the work of Haggai & Zechariah.
- ❖ At the time of the book of Haggai, it had been 16 years since the initial work on rebuilding the Temple had begun
- ❖ In Haggai 2:23, Zerubbabel becomes the center of the Messianic line, like a signet ring sealing both branches together

Hebrew Names of GOD used in Haggai

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Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

Two references to Christ in the Book of Haggai are highlighted. The first is 2:6–9, which begins by explaining that what God will do in the new temple will one day gain international attention. After an upheaval among the peoples of the Earth, the nations will be drawn to the temple to discover what they had been looking for: the One whom all the nations have desired will be displayed in splendor in the temple. The presence of this One will cause the memory of Solomon's glorious temple to fade so that only

Christ's glory remains. Along with the glory of Christ's presence will come great peace, since the resplendent Prince of Peace Himself will be there.

The second reference to the coming Messiah is 2:23. The book closes with a mention of Zerubbabel, which ties this book, near the end of the Old Testament, with the first book in the New Testament: Zerubbabel is one of the people listed in the genealogies of Jesus. Two things make Zerubbabel significant and link him to Christ:

1. Zerubbabel is a *sign* of a man chosen by God, from whose yielded nature God causes to flow life, leadership, and ministry. What Zerubbabel did in part, Jesus did in full as the Servant of the Lord.
2. Zerubbabel is also in the *line* of the Messiah. The lists of Jesus' ancestors in Matthew and Luke include the name of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, whose own personal significance was surpassed by his role as one who pointed ahead to the coming Savior of the world

Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

A brief but beautiful reference to the Holy Spirit is found in 2:5. The previous verses show the people of God discouraged as they compare the temple they are now building with the glorious temple of Solomon, which the new temple is meant to replace. The word of the Lord to them is: "Be strong . . . and work." The motivation to do this is also stated: "For I am with you."

Haggai 2:5 then explains how the Spirit of God is meant to interact with the spirit of the people in order to get the work accomplished. Verse 5 includes these significant points:

1. The Holy Spirit is a vital part of God's covenant with His people, "according to the word that I covenanted with you."
2. The Holy Spirit is an abiding gift to the people of God: "My Spirit remains among you."
3. The presence of the Holy Spirit removes fear from the hearts of God's people. Therefore, "Do not fear!"

These principles remain the same for the people of God today. At the heart of God's covenant with His people is the constant operation of the Holy Spirit, working to

release them from fear, so that they may move boldly in fulfilling the divine commission.

Mega Themes of Haggai

RIGHT PRIORITIES

God had given the Jews the assignment to finish the Temple in Jerusalem when they returned from captivity. After 15 years, they still had not completed it. They were more concerned about building their own homes than finishing God’s work. Haggai told them to get their priorities straight.

It is easy to make other priorities more important than doing God’s work. But God wants us to follow through and build up his Kingdom. Don’t stop and don’t make excuses. Set your heart on what is right and do it. Get your priorities straight.

GOD’S ENCOURAGEMENT

Haggai encouraged the people as they worked. He assured them of the divine presence of the Holy Spirit and of final victory, and instilled in them the hope that the Messiah would reign.

If God gives you a task, don’t be afraid to get started. His resources are infinite. God will help you complete it by giving you encouragement from others along the way.

Life Lessons in Haggai

Truth	Lesson
<p>Growing in Godliness</p> <p>Haggai’s prophecy speaks as poignantly to us today as it did to the original hearers. God is asking His people to build a place for His glory to dwell. In Haggai’s day, that building was a physical one. Today the “building” is to take place in our hearts and lives both individually and corporately as the church. God desires to pour greater glory on and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Hear God’s word to us today. As believers, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). ❖ God wants to display His glory through His people, the church. Commit to the Lord to be a person in whom His glory can dwell and through whom His glory can be made manifest. ❖ Ask God to fill His church with such visible glory that the nations of the Earth will come to Jesus.

<p>through His children so that the peoples of the Earth will come to Jesus, the Desire of All Nations.</p>	
<p>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</p> <p>We find in God’s word to Zerubbabel (a type of Christ) a powerful picture of the authority given through Jesus to His church. A signet ring represented the power, authority, and honor of the one to whom it belonged. As New Testament believers, we are to understand that God has invested in the church, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the same power, authority, and honor He gave to His Son.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ask God to give you life-changing understanding of this truth. Allow it to dynamically change the way you relate to God and to others. ❖ Study the life of Jesus to see the power and authority God has given to you. Step out in the authority of Jesus. Remember, He has chosen you.
<p>Pursuing Holiness</p> <p>To walk in holiness is to walk in obedience to God’s ways. The Lord “stirred up” the spirit of the leaders and the people to obey Him. Their obedience did not come from their own strength or even from their desire to change.</p> <p>Holy living comes by God’s power working in us to transform us into the image of Jesus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pray and ask the Lord to stir up your spirit so that you will obey Him. Recognize that it is the Holy Spirit who gives us the ability and desire to do all that God asks of us. He changes us into the image of Jesus, “from glory to glory” (2 Cor. 3:18).
<p>The Walk of Faith</p> <p>Every generation of God’s people faces the same challenge: to seek first</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand God’s principle of giving. Make God’s priorities your priorities. Give Him the firsts of your time, talent, and treasure. Do not live by the world

<p>the things of God and then to trust Him to provide everything needed for life and faith. The economy of God's kingdom is very different from the world's. When we seek to satisfy our own desires first, we will be in want; but when we give our first and best to God, we will "have an abundance for every good work" (Matt. 6:33; 2 Cor. 9:8).</p>	<p>system, which tells you to look out for yourself first. Honor the Lord, and He will honor you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Make the work to which God has called you a priority in your life. When you establish that as a foundation in everyday living, you will see the Lord's blessing begin to flow in and through your life.
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Praise Points in Haggai

- ❖ The people who challenge us to straighten out our priorities (1:1)
- ❖ Those places God gives us where we may see His glory (1:8)
- ❖ The circumstances He uses to call us back to Himself (1:9-11)
- ❖ The courage we need to obey Him (2:4)
- ❖ The promise of a future millennial reign of peace (2:7-9)
- ❖ His power, authority, and rule (2:6-9, 22-23).

Worship Insights in Haggai

- ❖ Worship should take priority over personal comfort (1:2-4).
- ❖ Lack of blessings should lead us to reflect on our ways (1:6, 9-11).
- ❖ Obedience to the Lord brings Him honor and glory (1:8, 12).
- ❖ A proper attitude is the starting point for true worship (1:12).
- ❖ God promises us His comforting presence through His Spirit (2:4-9).
- ❖ Disobedience defiles the offerings we may bring to God (2:12-14).

An Outline of Haggai

I. A Call to Renew the Work of God [Hag 1:1-15](#)

A. By Refusing to Offer Our Excuses [Hag 1:1-2](#)

B. By Setting Our Priorities [Hag 1:3-6](#)

1. God's Work Must Come Before Our Work

2. God's Ways Must Come Before Our Ways

C. By Getting Involved in Our Lord's Work [Hag 1:7-12](#)

1. The Purposes of Obedience
2. The Costs of Disobedience
3. The Beauty of Obedience

D. By Our Receiving God's Enablement [Hag 1:13-15](#)

E. Conclusion

II. A Call to Reject a Negative Spirit [Hag 2:1-9](#)

A. For Our Present Needs: A Divine Formula [Hag 2:1-5](#)

1. Of Human Responsibility [Hag 2:4](#)
2. Of Divine Presence [Hag 2:4](#)
3. Of Divine Promise [Hag 2:5](#)
4. Of the Divine Spirit [Hag 2:5](#)

B. For Our Future Participation: A Divine Finale [Hag 2:6-9](#)

1. An Immovable Kingdom [Hag 2:6](#)
2. An Immovable King [Hag 2:7](#)
3. An Immovable Glory [Hag 2:8-9](#)

C. Conclusion

III. A Call to Personal Holiness [Hag 2:10-19](#)

A. Holiness is Not "Contagious" [Hag 2:10-12](#)

B. Evil is "Contagious" [Hag 2:13](#)

C. Holy Works Do Not Make Holy Persons [Hag 2:14](#)

D. A Holy God Gives All Good Gifts to Holy Persons [Hag 2:15-19](#)

E. Conclusion

IV. A Call to Participate in God's Triumph [Hag 2:20-23](#)

A. Loosely Hang on to the Perishable Things of Life [Hag 2:20-21](#)

B. Firmly Grasp the Unshakable Kingdom of God [Hag 2:22-23](#)

C. Conclusion