

# Snapshot of Haggai

## The Prophet:

The name Haggai means “festival” or “festival of Jehovah.”

We know practically nothing about the prophet himself.

He is the first of the three post-captivity prophets.

He is also mentioned in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14.

## The Date:

The ministry of the prophet is easily dated from the first verse of the book. The “second year of Darius the king” would have been 520 B.C. From the four dates given in the book (1:1; 2:1; 2:10; 2:20), it would appear that his primary work among the people was done in a period of only four months.

## The Message:

Much has happened since the prophecy of Zephaniah some 100 years earlier. Judgment had come against Judah through the hands of the Babylonians. In 539 BC, Cyrus of Persia took the city of Babylon. One year later he gave a decree allowing all exiles to return to their homeland. In 536 BC the first group of Jews returned to Jerusalem and began to rebuild. The foundation of the temple was laid. Work on the temple was stopped due to their laziness and the opposition from their neighbors. Nothing more happened until fifteen and sixteen years later when Haggai and Zechariah began their ministries.

Haggai was a prophet with a single focus: build the temple! He told the people all their failures were due to their indifference to the completion of the house of God.

The people were moved and the temple was finished in 516 or 515 BC.

## The Book:

The first message (1:1-5) brought a stinging rebuke to the people for building their own houses and looking to establish their material prosperity before looking to spiritual obligations.

The second message (2:1-9) was designed to encourage the builders who had undertaken the task of rebuilding the temple.

The third message (2:10-19) was designed to teach the people that their sacrifices and external rituals would be in vain if they did not purify their hearts.

The fourth message (2:20-23) is a Messianic prophecy.

## Outline of Haggai

- I. First Message: Rebuke for Neglecting the Temple (1:1-15)
  - A. The prophet and his commission (1:1)
  - B. The selfish indifference of the people (1:2-4)
  - C. The curse resulting from their attitude (1:5-6)
  - D. God's displeasure with the people (1:7-11)
  - E. The response of the people (1:12-15)
- II. Second Message: Glory of the New Temple (2:1-9)
  - A. God's blessing to abide with the builders (2:1-5)
  - B. The glory of the new temple to exceed that of the former temple (2:6-9)
- III. Third Message: Condition of Future Prosperity (2:10-19)
  - A. The present uncleanness of the people (2:10-14)
    - 1. Two questions about uncleanness (2:10-13)
    - 2. Application to the people (2:14)
  - B. A change of heart would result in a change of circumstances (2:15-19)
- IV. Fourth Message: A Glorious Future (2:20-23)
  - A. Surrounding nations to be overthrown (2:20-22)
  - B. Messianic hope preserved in Zerubbabel (2:23)

## Lessons for Today:

1. The preaching which moves people to righteousness is clear, direct, and authoritative in nature.
2. God's work must always be given priority over one's own projects and plans.