

## The Book of Haggai

<b>What His Name Means</b>	The name “Haggai” means “festive.” His name is important because he lived and prophesied during a time of the regathering of the people of God.
<b>When He Prophesied</b>	The last three books of the Minor Prophets – Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi – belong to a particular period in the history of the people of God known as the Post-Exile. In 539 BC, King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon. After he did, he declared that God’s people were allowed to turn to the Promised Land.
<b>Where He Belongs in Biblical Literature</b>	When reading the Bible, particularly the OT, discerning the general time frame a book was written will help you make sense of the whole. As we have seen, <u>much</u> of the prophets were pre-exile and exilic. In those books, judgment has been a constant theme because, well, Babylonian Captivity was judgment. But in Post-Exilic Works the tone changes a bit to more of: <u>“now that we are back in the land, what must we do to avoid repeating the mistakes of our ancestors?”</u>  The Post-Exilic Books are: 1-2 Chronicles (think Jabez); Ezra (helper); Nehemiah (rebuilder); Esther (saved her people) Haggai (festive); Zechariah (a King is Coming); Malachi (so is John the Baptist)
<b>Purpose of the Book</b>	This “festive” prophet has one great desire: to see the People of God worshipping in the temple in their land once again. As a result, he writes to urge them to rebuild the temple. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls. Ezra collected the Scriptures. But, for 18 years after Cyrus’ decree in 539, the vision of rebuilding the temple got put on the back burner. As a result, God stirred Haggai to essentially say: “quit dragging your feet. It’s been 18 years since you got home. Let’s get moving.”
<b>Uniquely Qualified</b>	In 2:3, asks two important questions: “does anyone remember this house – this Temple – in its former splendor? How, in comparison, does it look to you now? It must seem like nothing at all!” From this we can deduce that Haggai was an older man who <u>did</u> know what the temple looked like before the Babylonians destroyed it. He had lived during the exile when it was gone. He had returned to the Promised Land and waited patiently for temple construction to start. When it didn’t, he began to speak. Why? He looked back at the past and wanted to see his people rise from the ashes like a phoenix.
<b>Application</b>	The Post-Exile was a time of great opposition from Israel’s neighbors (look no further than Nehemiah). They spent so much time worrying about their safety that they gave no consideration to the status of the Lord’s house. In the NT, we are that “temple.” We must not neglect that Lord’s desire to “rebuild” it the way he desires.
<b>Key Verses</b>	<i>“Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?” (1:4)</i>

### The Call to (Re)Build (1:1-9)

*In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest: <sup>2</sup>This is what the Lord Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord’s house.’” <sup>3</sup>Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: <sup>4</sup>“Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?” <sup>5</sup>Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways. <sup>6</sup>You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.” <sup>7</sup>This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful*

thought to your ways.<sup>8</sup> Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the Lord.<sup>9</sup> "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house.

1. The revival of the Post-Exile was incomplete without proper attention to the Lord's house. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls. Ezra collected the Scriptures. Esther saved her people. Jabez (from 1 Chronicles) provided the blessing. But it the revival wasn't complete. A house of the Lord was needed.
2. The opposition was external in the other books (i.e., Ezra, Nehemiah). Now the opposition is internal: "each of you is busy with your own house."

### **God's Stirring of a Person in Mind for the Task: Zerubbabel (1:12-15)**

<sup>12</sup> Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the Lord their God had sent him. And the people feared the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: "I am with you," declares the Lord. <sup>14</sup> So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God, <sup>15</sup> on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.

In addition to building the walls and collecting the Scriptures Ezra and Nehemiah taught the Israelites to do good, seek justice, strengthen the oppressed, and render justice for the orphan and the widow. Now the time was ripe for Zerubbabel, a Jew with a Babylonian name, to lay the foundations. Without the ethical teachings and reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, Zerubbabel would have been responsible for building a useless structure, one that is just a building. But not the time was right.

### **It Will Be a Glorious Place (2:1-9)**

<sup>1</sup> on the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: <sup>2</sup> "Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua son of Jozadak,<sup>[a]</sup> the high priest, and to the remnant of the people. Ask them, <sup>3</sup> 'Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing?' <sup>4</sup> But now be strong, Zerubbabel,' declares the Lord. 'Be strong, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,' declares the Lord, 'and work. For I am with you,' declares the Lord Almighty.<sup>5</sup> 'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.' <sup>6</sup> "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. <sup>7</sup> I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the Lord Almighty. <sup>8</sup> 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the Lord Almighty. <sup>9</sup> 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the Lord Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the Lord Almighty."

1. The past needs to be restored: "who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory?"
2. The future needs to be better: "the glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house."
3. In this house, the Lord will grant peace: They shall call Him Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, the Prince of Peace.

### **Faithfulness Will Bear Fruitfulness (2:10-19)**

<sup>14</sup> Then Haggai said, "So it is with this people and this nation in my sight,' declares the Lord. 'Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled. <sup>15</sup> "Now give careful thought to this from this day on<sup>[b]</sup>—consider

how things were before one stone was laid on another in the Lord's temple. <sup>16</sup> When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. <sup>17</sup> I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew, and hail, yet you did not return to me,' declares the Lord. <sup>18</sup> 'From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid. Give careful thought: <sup>19</sup> Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. "From this day on I will bless you."

While defilement is transferrable, righteousness is not. So, Haggai tells them to consecrate themselves to be blessed by God in their undertaking.

### **And It All Points to Jesus (2:20-23)**

<sup>20</sup> The word of the Lord came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month: <sup>21</sup> "Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. <sup>22</sup> I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother. <sup>23</sup> "'On that day,' declares the Lord Almighty, 'I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares the Lord, 'and I will make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you,' declares the Lord Almighty."

Haggai predicts that Zerubbabel – i.e., one of his descendants – will shatter foreign kingdoms and that the Lord will make him his signet ring. Zerubbabel was of the Line of David. That makes him of the line of Christ. God called him not to neglect the house of the Lord because he had a Savior in mind.