

*Haggai*  
*"Consider your ways"*



THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

Many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy . . . (Ezra 3: 12)

*Building The Second Temple Of Jerusalem*

*Color Wood Engraving After Gustave Dor*

*19Th Century*

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*The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: "Have you not observed that these people are saying, 'The Lord has rejected the two clans that he chose'? Thus they have despised my people so that they are no longer a nation in their sight. Thus says the Lord: If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them."*

*Jeremiah 33:25,26*



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### INTRODUCTION

#### AUTHOR & DATE

Haggai is one of the 12 "minor" prophets and his name is a form of the Hebrew word *hag* which means "feast", so his name means something like "festive" or "feast of YHWH.

Nothing is known about Haggai's earlier life, parents or tribal connections.

All four of Haggai's messages are dated in the second year of King Darius I of Persia (520 B.C.). Haggai's precision in dating his oracles is typical for Neo-Babylonian and Persian times.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Along with Zechariah and Malachi, Haggai is one of the post-exilic prophets who prophesied to the returned exiles after their 70-year captivity in Babylon. Cyrus the Great had captured Babylon in 539 B.C. (cf. Isaiah 45:1-7; Daniel 5) and in 538 B.C. issued the decree to release the Israelites to return to Judah to rebuild their temple (Ezra 1:1-4). They quickly rebuilt the altar and resumed Levitical sacrifices (Ezra 3:1-6), and in the second year of the return laid the temple foundation (Ezra 3:8-12; 5:16). The rebuilding effort had stalled because of opposition (Ezra 4). Haggai called the people back to work after 16 years, and the people resumed the work to finish the temple.

#### PURPOSE

Haggai rebuked the leaders and the people for stopping construction on the temple, which they had started 16 years earlier. The Israelites were not only intimidated by the indigenous peoples to stop working on YHWH's temple, but they busied themselves instead building their own houses and with their personal life-styles (Zechariah 7:4-6). Apathy toward rebuilding YHWH's house set in among God's people in Judah and Jerusalem and YHWH had to call them to repentance.

Eighteen years had passed since Cyrus the Great had issued the decree to allow the Israelites to return to Judah and rebuild the temple in 538 B.C. In 520 B.C. the Spirit of YHWH moved Haggai to deliver 4 oracles to the Israelites to rebuke them for their laziness and disobedience, but also to assure them of His presence and faithfulness to keep His covenant promises. The ultimate purpose in the rebuilding project is found in Haggai 1:7,8:

*"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.*

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## THEOLOGICAL EMPHASIS

The overarching theme of Haggai is the need to rebuild the Lord's house in the context of Israel's messianic hope and the promise that He will rebuild the house of David.

Zerubbabel is in the messianic line: a descendent of King David, and an ancestor of:

*"...Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ."*

*(Matt 1:16)*

Genesis 49:10; 2 Samuel 7:8-17; Psalm 89:4,24,34-37; Amos 9:11-12; Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:32,33

Other important concerns of Haggai include:

1. The word of the prophet is the word of God. It is *"...by the hand of Haggai..."*, but it is God's word.
2. The temple as God's earthly dwelling place and the center for Levitical worship.
3. The need to place God's priorities first.
4. The sovereign power of God: He controls weather, crops, nature, armies and nations.
5. The righteous judgment of God on all sin.
6. The necessity for the holiness of all who approach God for worship or service.
7. The faithfulness of God to fulfill all of His promises, whether for cursing or blessing (Mosaic Covenant) and especially to give them His promised land, seed and blessing in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-18; etc., etc.)

*"Thus says the Lord: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David my servant, and the Levitical priests who minister to me."*

*Jeremiah 33:20-22*

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## OUTLINES

According to the prophetic word formula: *"The Word of the LORD came..."*

REFERENCE	YEAR of DARIUS	MONTH	DAY	DATE
1:1	2	6	1	29 Aug 520 BC
2:1	2	7	21	17 Oct 520 BC
2:10	2	9	24	18 Dec 520 BC
2:20	2	9	24	18 Dec 520 BC

{Of 38 verses in Haggai, the formula of revelation in various forms occurs at least 29 times}

### Exegetical Outline

- I. *God's desire to rebuild the temple* *1:1-15*
  - A. *Introduction and historic setting* *1:1*
  - B. *The command to rebuild* *1:2-11*
  - C. *The response of the people* *1:12-15*
  
- II. *God's promise of future glory* *2:1-9*
  - A. *Remembering the past glory* *2:1-3*
  - B. *Reminding of the present glory* *2:4-5*
  - C. *Revealing the future glory* *2:6-9*
  
- III. *God's promise of future blessing* *2:10-19*
  - A. *The problem: unclean worship* *2:10-14*
  - B. *The punishment: unproductive work* *2:15-19a*
  - C. *The promise: undeserved blessing* *2:19b*
  
- IV. *God's promise to Zerubbabel* *2:20-23*
  - A. *His promise of judgment* *2:20-22*
  - B. *His promise of Messiah* *2:23*

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## Week #1

I. *God's desire (command) to rebuild the temple* 1:1-15

A. *Introduction and historic setting* 1:1

*The repeated date formulas anchor the event in a specific historical context*

*Haggai is the messenger (prophet) but the words are the words of \_\_\_\_\_*

*The recipients are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*

B. *The command to rebuild* 1:2-11

*They're called "These people..." by YHWH because of their excuses and disobedience*

*They misused God's \_\_\_\_\_.*

*They experienced God's \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Their obedience will please God and \_\_\_\_\_ YHWH.*

*Their disobedience will result in God withholding His \_\_\_\_\_.*

C. *The response of the people* 1:12-15

*They \_\_\_\_\_ the Word of YHWH and \_\_\_\_\_ Him.*

*They experienced the blessing of YHWH in the promise of His presence.*

*They did the \_\_\_\_\_ of YHWH.*

*"For behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it."*

*Jeremiah 30:3*

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## Questions to Consider-Week #1

1. How would you characterize the Jewish exile's life priorities and their attitude toward rebuilding the second temple, which represented the presence of YHWH, and the location where He is worshipped?  

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2. God calls the exiles to, "Consider your ways" and then details the lack of blessing in their lives (v.6-11). Can you make application to our day and national situation; or at a more individual and personal level?  

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3. Who or what is in charge of the climate of this planet? Vote for one:  
The EPA [ ]      Greta Thundberg [ ]      God [ ]
4. Verses 12-15 are a clear example of the Scriptural principle that:  
Obedience to the Word of God results in \_\_\_\_\_ but  
disobedience to the Word of God results in \_\_\_\_\_.
5. God's gracious promise that, "I am with you..." is manifested in the spiritual motivation of the leadership and the people to return to work on the house of YHWH of Hosts, their \_\_\_\_\_(v.14b)

*"For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

*Jeremiah 29:10-11*



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Week #2

II. God's promise of future glory 2:1-9

A. Remembering the past glory 2:1-3

Haggai's second message is to the same two leaders plus "...all the remnant of the people..." during the Feast of Tabernacles

The second temple is compared to the first by the older folks of the remnant.

B. Reminding of the present glory 2:4-5

The same audience is exhorted (now) to be \_\_\_\_\_.

They are reminded of the \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant which obligated them to \_\_\_\_\_, but also promised God's protection and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Ex 19:4-6; 33:14)

Since YHWH's Spirit is with them, they do not need to \_\_\_\_\_.

C. Revealing the future glory 2:6-9

The future \_\_\_\_\_ will be greater.

The future \_\_\_\_\_ will be greater.

The future \_\_\_\_\_ will be greater.

At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised,  
"Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain.

Hebrews 12:26-28

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## Questions to Consider-Week #2

1. How did the "older" returnees possibly discourage the rebuilding effort? (2:3)  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Doing God's work God's way means working in total dependence on His: \_\_\_\_\_ which He provides by His continual \_\_\_\_\_ which He had promised in the Mosaic Covenant. (2:4,5)
3. At Mt Sinai YHWH shook the mountain and the surrounding region. In the future He promises to shake \_\_\_\_\_. (2:6,7)  
Isaiah 2:12-21; Joel 3:16; Ezekiel 38:19,20; Zechariah 14:1-5; Matthew 24:29,30
4. Between verses 6 through 9 YHWH says, "I will..." four times. Do you think He will actually accomplish what He says He will do? Vote for one.

No [ ]

Maybe [ ]

I dunno [ ]

**YES! [ ]**

Genesis 12:1-3; 17:8; Exodus 29:45; Leviticus 26:45; Zechariah 8:8, 10:6; 14:4,5, Isaiah 41:10,13; 46:8-10; Matthew 4:19; 11:28; 16:18; John 6:37; 14:3,14,21

5. The promises of the latter glory being greater and peace in "this place" have not happened yet. These will be features of the Millennial Kingdom Jesus Christ will establish at His second coming.  
Isaiah 2:4; 9:6; 60:1-22; Zechariah 9:9,10; Ezekiel 43:1-5; Joel 3:17; Rev 20:1-6

*But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.*

*Acts 3:18-21*

*Sola Gratia*

*Sola Fide*

*Solus Christus*

*Sola Scriptura*

*Soli Deo Gloria*

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Week #3

III. *God's Promise of Future Blessing* 2:10-19

A. *The problem: unclean worship* 2:10-14

Using principles from the Law (2:5) the priests are questioned about issues of holiness and defilement.

Concerning the question, "Is holiness transferable?" The answer is \_\_\_\_\_(12)

Concerning the question, "Is defilement transferable?" The answer is \_\_\_\_\_(13)

The application to "...*this people, and with this nation before me...*" is because

every work of their hands and even their offerings are \_\_\_\_\_(14)

B. *The punishment: unproductive work* 2:15-19a

The people are once again called to "consider" (think carefully about their lives) and to look back from the time the temple was founded and answer YHWH's question, "How did you fare?" They may have worked hard, but YHWH thwarted their labors. (15-16)

They were back in the land and, since stopping work on the temple for sixteen years, their hard work was not productive. Yet, they still didn't \_\_\_\_\_(17)

Verse 18 calls them to carefully think back (2x) from that day, the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, and again, the time stamp is the laying of the temple foundation. The sovereign hand of God to hinder their efforts is in view and the expected answer to His question is \_\_\_\_\_ (19a)

C. *The promise: undeserved blessing* 2:19b

Some scholars believe the stress placed on the date in 2:10,15,18 means that this day was the last day of the 70 year chastisement, and why they still suffered the consequences of this judgment for 18 years after entering the land. Regardless of past failures and disobedience, they now have this glorious promise: ***"From this day on I will bless you"*** (19b)

*"...I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse,  
and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

Genesis 12:3

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## Questions to Consider-Week #3

1. Holiness is not communicable, but uncleanness or defilement is (2:10-13).  
How can this principle be applied in our spiritual lives?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The above principles are applied by YHWH to His people. Can you identify defiled or unholy worship (or doctrine) in the broader "church" ("Big Eva"?) Care to name names? (Paul did: 1 Timothy 1:20; 2:17)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. If the Jewish exiles responded to Haggai's first oracle favorably, returned to work on the temple and enjoyed the presence of YHWH (1:12-14) how was it that they still had to endure the chastening of God for past sins? Can you state a principle based on Scripture that expresses this truth?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How is the sovereignty of God seen in the details of how He deals with the Jews?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The promise of YHWH in 19b is an example of His pure \_\_\_\_\_

*Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?*

*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.*

*For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.*

*Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king."*

*1 Samuel 15:22,23*

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Week #4

IV. God's promise to Zerubbabel 2:20-23

A. The promise of judgment 2:20-22

The word of YHWH came to Haggai a second time on the same day as in verse 10, but this time it is directed to Zerubbabel \_\_\_\_\_ which indicates that this message is a Messianic or \_\_\_\_\_ prediction. (20-21a)

Like v.6 future, universal, divine \_\_\_\_\_ is pictured and it will include the overthrow of "the throne (singular in Hebrew) of kingdoms". These kingdoms are apparently \_\_\_\_\_ (22)

(cf. Zechariah 12:2-9; 14:1-5; Revelation 16:16-18; 19:11-21)

B. The promise of Messiah 2:23

On the day YHWH judges the nations He will make Zerubbabel, whom He calls "my \_\_\_\_\_", and make him like a \_\_\_\_\_ ring. YHWH of Hosts will do this because He has \_\_\_\_\_ Zerubbabel. (23)

Haggai's fourth and final oracle prophesies the future judgment and destruction of the Gentile nations that, even in Haggai's day, were occupying the Land of Israel and threatening the existence of the Jewish people. The signet ring was the symbol of divine election and authority. It had been removed from Zerubbabal's grandfather Jehoiachin because of his sin and perverse leadership of God's people. (Jeremiah 22:24) At a future time the throne of David will be restored and Jesus Christ will rule His millennial kingdom from Jerusalem because God promised:

"In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." *Jeremiah 33:15*

(cf. 2 Sam 7:12,13; 1 Chron 17:10-14; Is 9:6,7; 16:5; 24:23; Jer 23:5,6; 33:17-26; Matt 1:1; Luke 1:32,33)

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne."

Matthew 25:31

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## Practical Principles from Haggai

1. The highest priority for the believer in YHWH is to worship Him.
2. YHWH told the returned Israelites to *"Consider your ways."* (1:5,7)  
For the Christian, if considering our ways reveals sin in our lives we are to confess it, turn from it in repentance and obey God's revealed will in Scripture.
3. Though it is an ancient principle:  
Disobedience to God's revealed Word still yields God's \_\_\_\_\_.  
and  
Obedience to God's revealed Word still yields God's \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Dwelling on past glory may hinder present work.  
  
*"Comparison is carnal." Prof Howard Hendricks*
5. Holiness does not "rub off", but defilement does.
6. God has fulfilled His promises in the past, and is currently fulfilling His promises in the present. We can trust Him to fulfill all of His promises concerning the future in His time.  
  
*"...I will...I will...I will...I will..."  
Haggai 2:6-9,23 (cf. Gen 12:1-3)*
7. Jesus Christ will return to this earth, judge the nations, will sit on the Davidic throne and will bring peace and perfect justice to this planet. If you have never trusted Him, turn from your sins in repentance and trust Him for salvation.

*Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord."*

*Leviticus 26:44,45*