

The Book of HAGGAI

Teacher: John M. Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Sunday Bible Class

INTRODUCTION:

AUTHOR: Haggai (whose name means "the festive one")

1. He was a contemporary of Zechariah (and Confucius).
2. We read of him in Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14-16.
3. He was a prophet of exhortation.

DATE: 520 BC

THEME: Building the Temple! The people's hope of further blessing depended on their accomplishing this task.

THE BACKGROUND:

1. The announcement of God's wrath upon Judah: Jeremiah 19:1-11
2. Prophecy of Babylonian captivity: Jeremiah 25:1-14
3. Seventy years of Babylonian captivity: Jeremiah 29:8-14
4. God through the prophets foretold a remnant of Israelites would return to their homeland.

THE TIMES:

1. Remember that Judah had been carried away into Babylonian captivity and Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed in 586 BC.
2. Following the death of Nebuchadnezzar (562 BC), there had been a series of weak rulers in Babylon.
3. In 539 BC Cyrus (a Persian) entered Babylon and took the city, bringing the Babylonian Empire to an end -thus began the reign of the Medes and Persian as the dominant world force.
4. In 538 BC Cyrus issued a decree that exiled persons could return to their homelands (read the account in 2 Chronicles 36 and Ezra 1 :2-4; 6:3-5), and the first group of exiles (some 50,000) returned under Zerubbabel in 536 BC (Isaiah 44:24- 45:7).
5. Upon their return to Jerusalem in 536 BC, this remnant restored the altar of sacrifices and laid the foundation for the Temple (Ezra 3:2; 5:16), but work ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius ! (520 BC) when Zechariah and Haggai were summoned by God to compel the people to complete the work.
6. Haggai's prophecies were given from August -December 520 BC, and the Temple was completed four years later.

OUTLINE:

I. GOD'S MESSAGE OF REBUKE, Chapter 1

A. Introduction, vv. 1-2

B. God's 1st message, vv. 3-11

1. The people have built themselves houses, but not the house of God.
2. God tells them to consider their ways ("take a good look at themselves").

C. The people's reaction, vv. 12-15

1. The people determined to obey the voice of God.
2. They got back to work in the house of the Lord.

II. GOD'S MESSAGE OF COURAGE & ASSURANCE, Chapter 2

A. God's 2nd message, vv. 1-9

1. The glory of Solomon's temple is recalled.
2. God encourages the people to be strong and work!
3. God promises to fill this new Temple with His glory.

B. God's 3rd message, vv. 10-19

1. Cleanness is not transferred, but uncleanness is!
2. This people must cleanse themselves.
3. Looking back over the past years, can Israel not see here need for dependence on God?

C. God's 4th message, vv. 20-23

1. God confirms His covenant through Zerubbabel.
2. God sets a signet (a seal) -approved, sanctioned!