

Haggai (“Festive”)

Introduction: Haggai wrote to the people who returned after the Exile to encourage them to rebuild the temple. He was a contemporary of Zechariah and Ezra (cf. Ezra 5:1), ministering in 520 BC. This is the second shortest book of the OT, after Obadiah. Outside of Ezekiel, no prophet is more focused on the temple than Haggai. I am indebted to David Dorsey’s basic outline.

- 1) **Focus # 1:** A message of rebuke and exhortation to begin rebuilding—1:1-11
 - This would be on August 29, 520 BC
 - a) **Introduction:** these (not “My”) people say, “The time has not yet come for Yahweh’s house to be built” (1:2)
 - work on the temple has been suspended for 16 years
 - i) **question:** is it a time for you to live in your paneled/wainscoted (opulent) *houses (bayit)* while this *house (bayit)* remains a *ruin (ḥārēb)*? (1:3–4)
 - They apparently took the lumber intended for the Temple and used it on their own houses. (cf. Ezra 3:7)
 - (1) **you planted much (harbēh) but it brought little (hābe’ mē’āt);** you eat, drink, put on clothes, etc., but still lack (1:5–6)
 - (a) **FOCUS: therefore, build my house!** (1:7–8)
 - (2) **you expected much (harbēh) but got little (mē’āt);** what you brought (*hābē’tem*) home, I blew away (1:9a–b)
 - ii) **question:** why? because my *house (bayit)* remains a *ruin (ḥārēb)* while you are busy in your own *houses (bayit)* (1:9c–d)
 - b) **conclusion:** this is why there is scarcity and crop failure (1:10–11)
- 2) A report of the people’s response @ 3 weeks later—1:12-15
 - This would be September 21, 520 BC.
 - a) The work will continue for the next @ 4-5 years (cf. Ezra 6:15)
- 3) **Focus # 2:** a message of encouragement about the temple being built—2:1-9
 - During the autumn Feast of Tabernacles; October 17, 520 BC. This is 440 years to the day after Solomon had completed his temple in 960 BC.
 - a) **splendor (kābôd) of the former temple (hāri’sôn)** was greater than this small *present temple (habbayit hazzeh)* being built @ 66 years later (2:3)
 - i) **encouragement** to take courage (2:4a–c)
 - (1) **reassurance** of Yahweh’s presence (2:4d)
 - (a) **FOCUS: live in light of the terms of the covenant** that Yahweh commanded when he brought his people out of Egypt (particularly: “build him a dwelling!”) (2:5a)
 - (2) **reassurance** of Yahweh’s presence (2:5b)
 - ii) **encouragement:** soon Yahweh will shake the nations and bring their wealth and fill the temple with it (2:6–8) (cf. Is. 60:4-14)

- b) **splendor** (*kābôd*) of **this present temple** (*habbayit hazzeh*) will surpass that of the *former temple* (*hāri'sōn*) (2:9)
 - i) Remember 1 Kings 8:11
 - ii) It will be rebuilt during the Millennium
 - (1) There are 4 temples: Solomon, Herod, Tribulation and Kingdom

- 4) A message of promise that Yahweh will now bless His people—2:10-19
 - This would be Dec. 18, 520 BC
 - a) They have been working on the temple for about 3 months

- 5) A message about Zerubbabel's (the political leader) significance—2:20-23
 - This would be Dec. 18, 520 BC
 - a) Zerubbabel was Jehoiachin's/Jeconiah's grandson, part of David's promised line of rulers. Jehoiachin's offspring are forbidden by God from ever ruling as king. (Jer. 22:24-30) Zerubbabel never becomes the actual king.
 - b) This is a reference to the ultimate fulfillment in the return of Jesus the Messiah.

- 6) **Things we need to remember (think, feel, do)**
 - a) **Present:** We need to listen to the commands of Haggai to "Set your heart on/consider your ways." Consider the moral implications of your attitude and actions.
 - i) Remember 1:5, 7; 2:15, 18
 - b) **Present:** By exalting and embracing God's values rather than living only for what is important to us, we can honor Him.
 - c) **Future:** We need to remember that God will indeed fulfill His unbreakable covenant with David by sending Jesus, the Son of David, and by establishing his house, kingdom, and throne forever. (Rydelnik)