Bible Synthesis IV

OVERVIEW OF HAGGAI

This little book is the first of the post-exilic prophets. The prophets we have been studying up to this point warned of the judgment of the exile in Babylon (for Judah). Now we turn to the conditions following the return from that captivity. These are the events recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah.

Haggai was a contemporary of Zechariah (and also of Confucius in China). *Read Ezra 5:1–2* before beginning the study of Haggai.

The "Times of the Gentiles" were in progress, in their second stage—that of the Medo-Persian Empire. The decree of Cyrus was in 538 B.C. (see Ezra 1:3). The post-exilic Temple was started in 536, but opposition brought the building to a halt.

Haggai's purpose in writing was to interpret their present distress. They were suffering from bad harvests, drought, trouble, and sorrow. He encourages them to build the Temple. Its completion had been delayed for 15 years (from 535 – 520 B.C.). God's blessing had been withheld because they had not returned to this work. The Temple was completed 520 – 515 B.C.

You will notice that the dates given in Haggai are according to the reign of a Gentile (Persian) King, Darius I (Hystaspes), who ascended to the throne in 521 B.C. Haggai's writing begins in his second year, around 520 B.C. This book covers a little less than 4 months in that year (see 1:1; 2:10, 20). Haggai appears for just a short moment in the history of Israel. The Temple was completed and dedicated just 4 years after the call of Haggai.

Haggai ("my feast"), so called in anticipation of the joyous return from Babylonian exile. Haggai not only joined with Zechariah in prophesying to them, but both men also helped with the work of building (Ezra 5:1–2). This little book containing but 38 verses is all that we have of his prophetic message, and that was enough!

This little book is addressed as follows:

1. To Zerubbabel ("seed of Babylon"), the governor (who was of the line of David – see Matt. 1:12–13) —1:1; 2:2, 21.
2. To Joshua ("the LORD is salvation"), the High Priest —1:1; 2:2.
3. To the people —1:13; 2:2.

Haggai and Zechariah should be read along with Ezra and Nehemiah, in order to get a good picture of the times as well as of the situation in general for the returned exiles.

"Salting the Oats"

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Haggai 1:1–11 — How does Haggai's stern message of rebuke relate to God's work today?

OVERVIEW OF HAGGAI

• *Haggai 1:*

1. MESSAGE CONCERNING NEGLIGENCE —1:1–15

Date: 6th. month, first day (Aug.–Sept., 520 B.C.)

• Things had really changed from what they were prior to the Babylonian captivity:

There was no Jewish king, only a governor (a descendant of David, now under Darius, the Gentile king), and a High Priest (descendant of Jos´edech, who was High Priest at the time of the Babylonian invasion). These two men were over the affairs of the land.

• Gone is the glory of the Davidic kingdom and its succession.

• Here is the day of Gentile (Persian) rule: THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.

• *A STERN MESSAGE OF REBUKE —*

-1. Introduction —1:1–2

• Time: 2nd year of Darius, 6th month, 1st day = Aug.-Sept. 520 B.C. (*or probably Aug. 29, 520 B.C.*). As stated above, the Times of The Gentiles (Cf. Luke 21:24) is in the second stage. Israel has been set aside nationally, they have had no king since Zedekiah was carried captive, and they will have no King until the Messiah, the Stone "cut out without hands" smites the image and sets up His Kingdom (cf. Dan. 2:34–35, 44–45). He is "the Desire of all nations" who shall come (Haggai 2:7).

• Zerubbabel ("seed of Babylon"), son of Shealtiel ("lent by God" —Matt. 1:12, "And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Sala´thiel; and Sala´thiel begat Zorob´abel"). *He was Governor of Judah.*

• Joshua, son of Jos´edech ("Jehovah is righteous"), the High Priest. [Jozadak —Ezra 3:2, 8; 5:2; 10:18; Neh. 12:26 — Jehozadak —I Chron. 6:14–15]

• The problem of this book is what the people are saying (see below) —1:2

-2. Warning in view of God's discipline —1:3–11

• His call:

(1. Appeal in view of their materialism —1:3–4

• It is "the Word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet," a divine-human authorship. It is the message from the LORD and it bears His authority.

• Their reason for not building:

·1. It is not the right time, or "the time has not come to build" —1:2

- They had been stopped by royal decree (Ezra 4:17–24). Thus, they might conclude, it was not the right time to build.

·2. Their personal materialism —1:4

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(2. Consider your ways —1:5–6

• They are told, "Consider your ways" in 1:5, 7. In 2:15, 18 the word "consider" appears 3 times. To consider one's ways is the first step on the way to repentance.

• They were lacking —1:6
- Cf. Matt. 6:19, 33
- Perhaps some of them, like many today, wondered when they would *ever* get ahead.

•The reason:

(1. His command to bring wood and build —1:7–8
- Again: "Consider your ways" —1:7

• He will take pleasure in the rebuilding.

• He will be glorified.

(2. The LORD declares this to be His judgment —1:9–11

• Why He blew on their crops —1:9–10

• He called for a drought upon all —1:11

• *THE LORD'S PRESENCE – A MESSAGE OF COMFORT —1:13*

-3. Work on the Temple is resumed —1:12–15

•The leaders respond —1:12

•Haggai addresses the people —1:13

- The LORD assures them of His presence (cf. 2:4b–5) —1:13

[The fact of His presence should assure them that NOW is the time to begin building (Contra. 1:2).]

•The LORD stirred up the spirit of —1:14a
- Zerubbabel — the governor
- Joshua — the High Priest
- Of "all the remnant of the people"
[What fact stirred them? The fact of that He was with them.]

•They began to work on the House of the LORD —1:14b

•Time: 2nd yr. of Darius, 6th month, 24th day — only 24 days to get their response. —1:15

• Key verse #1 — Haggai 1:14

• *Haggai 2:*

2. MESSAGE ABOUT COURAGE —2:1–9

Date: 7th. month, 21st. day (October, 520 B.C.)

(The glory of the future Temple)

• Time: Same year, 7th month, 21st day *(probably Oct. 17, 520 B.C.)*. This was the 7th and last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Lev. 23:39–44). [Cf. John 7:37–39, which took place on the same day of the year.] During the feast of Tabernacles they dwelt in booths for 7 days as a memorial of the exodus (Lev. 23:43).

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Haggai 1:12–15 — How does the people's response to God's message encourage us concerning God's work today?

Haggai 2:1–9 — How does this message about courage relate to our serving God?

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"Salting the Oats"

Haggai 2:10–19 — How does this message concerning separation relate to our service and walk with God today?

• *CHALLENGE TO ZERUBBABEL TO BE STRONG*

-1. The inferiority of this Temple to Solomon's —2:2–3

•Who among them saw the first Temple? They were 70 years in Babylon.

•Comparison: It is "as nothing" —

•See Ezra 3:12–13 (vv. 8–13 for context).

-2. Assurance of the LORD's presence —2:4–5

•Word to Zerubbabel and Joshua from the LORD —2:4–5:

(1. Challenge: "be strong" —2:4

(2. Commission: "and work" —2:4

(3. Commitment: "for I am with you" —2:4–5
- This is the LORD's promise.
- Cf. Exod. 19:5; 29:45–46; 33:14

-3. Prediction of the "latter House" —2:6–9

(1. Future judgment ("I will shake") —2:6–7a
- Cf. Heb. 12:26 (Read 12:26–29). Cf. Rev. 16:18–20.

(2. Christ, "the Desire of all nations shall come" —2:7b

(3. He will fill this House with glory —2:7c
In Ezek. 43:1–6 the Glory of God returns to the Temple (cf. Ezek. 11:23). Notice that the Glory will return using exactly the same route by which it departed. Of course, Jesus Christ is the Glory of the LORD, and He will return the Glory of God to the nation of Israel.

(4. The Glory of the Millennial Temple will be greater —2:8–9

Had He desired silver and gold for His Temple, He could provide it (as He can provide His offerings —see Ps. 50:12).

The greater glory plus, "in this place will I give peace." —2:9. Solomon means "peace," but his Temple saw much war. There will be peace when the greater than Solomon comes to reign upon the throne of David.

• Key verse #2 — Haggai 2:9

3. MESSAGE CONCERNING SEPARATION —2:10–19

Date: 9th. month, 24th. day (December, 520 B.C.)

• Time: Same year, 9th month, 24th day *(probably Dec. 18, 520 B.C.)* —This was 2 months later (cf. 2:1). It would have been the time of the early rain.

-1. Two questions and application —2:12–14

(1. One who bears holy flesh is holy. Can he transfer that holiness to any other food he touches? Answer, no. Holiness cannot be transferred. —2:12

•See Lev. 6:18

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(2. If one that is unclean touch that same food, will that uncleanness be transferred. Answer, Yes. Uncleanness can be transferred —2:13
- See Lev. 22:4–6; Num. 19:11 , 22

(3. Application —2:14
- They are unclean, therefore, everything they touch is unclean.

-2. Look backward —2:15–17
- Before they started building He was not blessing their harvests.

-3. Look forward —2:18–19
- From the day that the foundation was laid —2:18
- Is the seed yet in the barn? —2:19a
- "… from this day will I bless you" —2:19b

4. MESSAGE CONCERNING JUDGMENT —2:20–23

Date: 9th. month, 24th. day (December, 520 B.C.)

- Time: The same month and day. The message concerns the latter days—the end times.

-1. Compare Hag. 2:21–23 with Heb. 12:18–29 [Cf. 2:6–7] —Consider Heb. 12:18–29 as follows:

(1. Period of Law—*Past* — "then shook" —Heb. 12:26
- Heb. 12:18–21

(2. Period of Grace—*Present* —Heb. 12:22–24
- Note those things to which we come: Mount Zion, the city of the living God, etc.

(3. Period of "shaking" and "overthrowing" —*Prospective* —
- Tribulation and Armageddon —Heb. 12:26b–29
- Will the Church have a part in the Kingdom? No question about it! See Heb. 12:28.
  - Shaking (Haggai 2:6–9):
    ·1. The heavens
    ·2. The earth
    ·3. The dry *land* (notice italics in your Bible)
    ·4. All nations
- "A kingdom which cannot be moved (shaken)" —Heb. 12:28
- Haggai 2:21–23 — "I will shake …"
  - What will He shake?
    ·1. The heavens
    ·2. The earth
    ·3. "I will overthrow the throne (singular) of kingdoms"
    ·4. "I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen" [Spiritual???]
    ·5. "I will overthrow" — armaments, armies …

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Haggai 2:20–23 — How does this message concerning judgment relate to our work and walk with God today?

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-2. The word concerning Zerubbabel —2:21, 23

- Zerubbabel = "seed of Babylon" — He was a descendant of David through Solomon. He was grandson of Jechoniah (or Jehoiachin, or Coniah in Jer. 22:24–30), and son of Shealtiel ("lent by God"). Joseph, husband of Mary, descended from Zerubbabel.
- Word concerning Zerubbabel in 2:23:
  (1. Made "as a signet" — a sign of royal authority [The *throne* is Christ's through Zerubbabel and Joseph.] Contrast Jer. 22:24, speaking of Coniah— "signet."
  (2. "I have chosen thee …" — Jesus had *legal* title to the throne, since Joseph was a descendant of David through Zerubbabel (see Matt. 1:12). [***But***, see Luke 3:27— Mary's genealogy. Mary was also a descendant of David through a Zerubbabel who was the son of a Shealtiel. Though, Mary's Shealtiel was a descendant of Neri.]

END OF HAGGAI

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