

Bible Study on the Book of Haggai

Study Notes: Haggai was a prophet who spoke the word of the Lord to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in about 520 BC after the seventy-year exile of the Jews (about 608-538 BC – see **Jeremiah ch25:11-12; ch29:11-14; Daniel ch9:2**). The name ‘Haggai’ means ‘festival of the Lord’. Haggai was known as a post-exilic prophet because his prophecies came after the exile. They were dated from the second year of Darius, king of Persia, over a four-month period (**Haggai ch1:1,15; ch2:1,10,21**).

Another prophet called Zechariah also spoke to the Jewish people at the same time as Haggai. Both prophets told the Jews to resume building the temple after the work had ceased because of the opposition from the enemies of the Jews (**Ezra ch4:1-24**). The Jews were shown why they had problems in the land, such as crop failure and drought, because of disobedience to God (**Haggai ch1:4-11; ch2:15-17**).

However, the response from Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest and all the remnant of the people was obedience to God’s word through Haggai and Zechariah. They were stirred up by God to continue rebuilding the temple regardless of what their enemies tried to do to stop them (**Ezra ch5:3-17**). An appeal to Darius, king of Persia by the enemies of the Jews led to them finding the decree that Cyrus, king of Persia, had issued to the Jews to return and rebuild the temple. As a result, Darius gave his full support to the Jews so that they could complete the building of the temple which was finished in the sixth year of Darius in about 516 BC (**Ezra ch6:1-15**).

In this little book of Haggai, God begins to give his people encouragement in saying that he was with his people (**Haggai ch1:13; ch2:4-5**). They did not appear to see blessing immediately (**Haggai ch2:18-19**), but God promised them fruitfulness later; the evidence is shown in Ezra where it says “they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo” (**Ezra ch6:14**). There is a specific message of blessing to Zerubbabel to conclude this book (**Haggai ch2:20-23**).

Bible Study Questions

It is encouraged that any small group up to about ten to twelve people pursuing such a study of this book should be allowed to see the notes and questions beforehand. In doing so, each person has time to do some study on this book and bring his or her contribution to the study. You may require more than one session to complete this study or be selective in which questions to attempt if you wish to limit time to one session only.

Q.1 Read the entire book to find out what it reveals of who God is.

Q.2 How do we know Haggai was a true prophet?

See **Haggai ch1:1,12-13; ch2:1,10,20** and compare **Ezra ch5:1-2; ch6:14**.

Q.3 Who are the people Haggai is speaking to when he brings the word of God to them?

See **Haggai ch1:1,12,14; ch2:2,20**.

Q.4 Why had the children of Israel suffered much loss in productivity?

See **Haggai ch1:4-11; ch2:15-17**.

Q.5 What happened to the children of Israel when they obeyed God's word?

See **Haggai ch1:12-15** and **Ezra ch5:2,5; ch6:14-22**.

Q.6 What does Haggai teach us about holiness? See **Haggai ch2:11-14**.

Q.7 What is known and significant about Zerubbabel?

See **Haggai ch1:12,14; ch2:2,4,20-23** and also **Ezra ch2:1-2; ch3:1-2,8-13; ch4:1-3; ch5:1-2; Nehemiah ch7:6-7; ch12:1,47; Matthew ch1:12-13; Luke ch3:27**.

Q.8 What can the Church learn from the prophecies of Haggai?

Read carefully each message in **Haggai ch1:1-12; ch1:13-15; ch2:1-9; ch10-19; ch20-23**.

Q.9 Is there evidence that there are parts of Haggai's prophecy still to be fulfilled?

See **Haggai ch2:6,9,20-23** and also **Hebrews ch12:25-29**.

Q.10 Discuss what is meant by Zerubbabel being made a signet?

See **Haggai ch2:23** and also **Genesis ch38:18,25; ch41:42; Esther ch3:10-12; ch8:2; Daniel ch6:17**.

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