

Haggai

Authorship: Haggai. Both Haggai and Zechariah are named by Ezra (Ezra 5:1; 6:14). Like Nehemiah, who would come to Jerusalem much later to rebuild its walls, Haggai was a man of action: After the Temple had sat unfinished for 15 years, it took Haggai just 23 days to inspire the people to resume the work. (The work would finally be completed in about 515 B.C. – see Ezra 6:15.)

Date: 1:1 dates Haggai's ministry in "the second year of King Darius's reign," or 520 B.C. (compare Ezra 4:24). The book can be divided into three separate prophecies, each given on a specified day of that year:

- First prophecy (1): first day of the sixth month, Elul (August-September) (1:1);
- Second prophecy (2:1-9): 21st day of seventh month, Tishri (September-October) (2:1);
- Third prophecy (2:10-23): 24th day of ninth month, Chislev (November-December) (2:10, 20).

Haggai probably recorded his prophecies soon after giving them.

Background: The first group of Jews returned from Babylonian exile in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1), and in 536 B.C. began rebuilding the Temple (Ezra 3:8-13). In about 535 B.C., however, deeply discouraged and under intense opposition, their work had ground to a halt (Ezra 4:24). 15 years later, in 520 B.C., God raised up Haggai and Zechariah to encourage them in the rebuilding and in personal holiness.

Recipients: The Jews who had returned from exile in 538 B.C.

Purpose: (1) To encourage the rebuilding of the temple; (2) To give instruction in holiness; (3) To show God's faithfulness.

Key Verse

"The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts" (Haggai 2:9 ESV).

Meaning of Name

Haggai, the sixth-century prophet who returned to Judah from Babylonian exile, has given his name to this book as its composer. His name means "Festive" in Hebrew.

Key Term: "Rebuilding"

The primary focus of this book is rebuilding the Jewish temple in Jerusalem after the return from Babylonian captivity.

One Sentence Summary

When Haggai proclaimed God's command to rebuild the temple, giving God's promises that the glory of the second temple would exceed that of the first temple, the people obeyed with a willing heart.

Outline:

I. The Call to Build (1:1-15)

A. The Background (1:1-2)

1. The Period (1:1a)
2. The Prophet (1:1b)
3. The Problem (1:2)

B. The Burden (1:3-11)

1. Its Context (1:3-4)
2. Its Content (1:5-11)
 - a. The Jews Condition Exposed (1:5-6)
 - b. The Jews Condition Explained (1:7-11)
 - i. The Cause (1:7-9)
 - ii. The Consequences (1:10-11)

C. The Blessing (1:12-15)

1. The Response (1:12)
2. The Reassurance (1:13)
3. The Revival (1:14-15)
 - a. The Truth (1:14)
 - b. The Time (1:15)

II. The Call to Behold (2:1-9)

A. The Present (2:1-3)

1. A Special People (2:1)
2. A Struggling People (2:2)
3. A Sorrowing People (2:3)

B. The Past (2:4-5)

1. An Application of Covenant Position (2:4)
 - a. Be Strong (2:4a)
 - b. Be Sure (2:4b)
2. An Appeal to Covenant Principle (2:5)

C. The Prospect (2:6-9)

1. The Lord and His Power (2:6-7a)
 - a. Shaking All Nature (2:6)
 - b. Shaking All Nations (2:7a)
2. The Lord and His Presence (2:7b-c)
 - a. In Grace (2:7b)
 - b. In Glory (2:7c)
3. The Lord and His Possessions (2:8)
4. The Lord and His Peace (2:9)

III. The Call to Behave (2:10-19)

A. The Blessing That Was Wanted (2:10-14)

1. The Principle of the Law (2:10-13)
 - a. Virtue Cannot Be Caught (2:10-12)
 - b. Vileness Cannot Be Contained (2:13)
2. The People of the Lord (2:14)
 - a. Unclean in Their Souls (2:14a)
 - b. Unclean in Their Sacrifices (2:14b)

B. The Blessing That Was Withheld (2:15-17)

1. The Neglected House (2:15)
2. The Negligent Heart (2:17b)

C. The Blessing That Was Waiting (2:18-19)

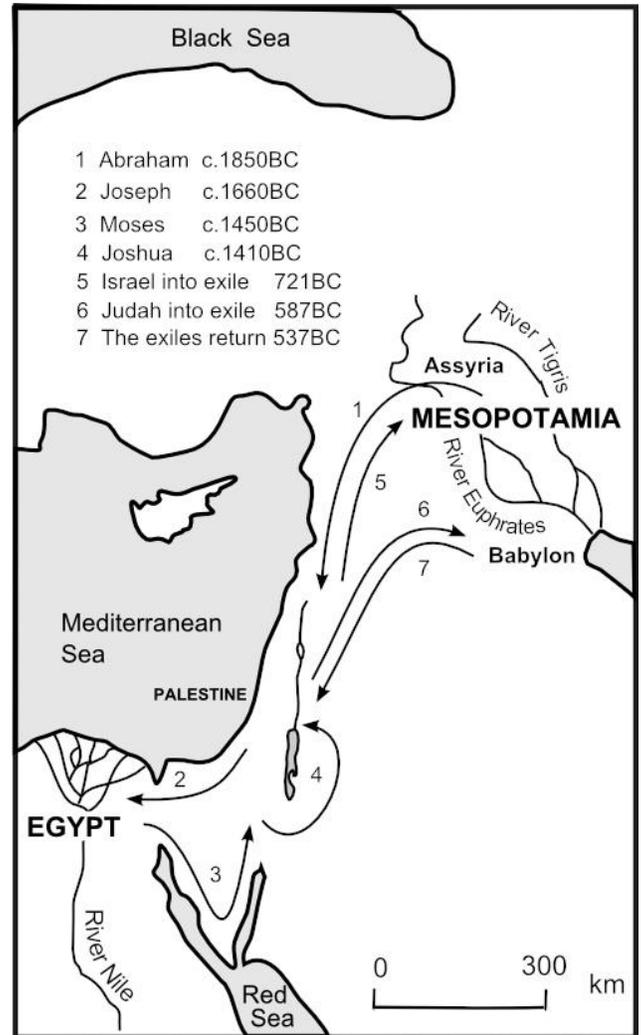
1. The Ground of Blessing (2:18)
2. The Greatness of Blessing (2:19)

IV. The Call to Believe (2:20-23)

A. God Will Manifest His Power (2:20-22)

1. By Shaking the Elements (2:20-21)
2. By Shattering the Enemy (2:22)

B. God Will Magnify His Prince (2:23)



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