

The Minor Prophets

Lesson 8

Haggai – Priorities

The Book of Haggai is a report of four messages from God to the post-exilic Jews who came back to a destroyed Jerusalem after about 70 years in exile in Babylon. Haggai was chosen by God to encourage the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. Over 25 times in this short book Haggai confirmed the divine authority of his message. Cyrus the Great, King of Persia had allowed about 50,000 Jews to return to Jerusalem in 536 BC. Spiritual apathy had set in by 520 BC, and only the foundation had been laid. The people became more interested in building their own houses and businesses than in building God's house. God sent the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to convict them and encourage them in their higher priority.

Read Haggai 1-2

1. Theologians believe they can fix the exact date of the events in Haggai 1:1 to August 29, 520 B.C. Who spoke to Haggai at that time and gave him an important message to take to the people (Haggai 1:1-3)?
2. What was the convicting question that God was asking the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem in Haggai 1:4?
3. What did God want them to consider and reflect on in Haggai 1:5-6? Did it sound like God expected them to rearrange their priorities?
4. They were working hard on planting crops, gathering food to eat, wine to drink, clothes to wear, and making money – but was it paying off (v 6)?
5. Having rebuked them for wasting their time in selfish pursuits, what did the Lord command them to do that was more important (Haggai 1:7-8)? Was there a cause and effect between their lack of success and their neglect of God (v 9-11)?

6. What was the response of the leaders, the high priest, and the people in Jerusalem to Haggai's message (1:12-15)? What further encouragement did Haggai give them in 1:13?

7. The Lord next spoke to them about a month after they had resumed building the Temple. According to Ezra 3:12-13 what were some of the older Jews who remembered Solomon's Temple saying? What were the rhetorical questions God asked the people concerning the comparison of their second Temple with Solomon's Temple (Haggai 2:3)?

8. In spite of the smaller, plainer Temple; did God reaffirm His presence with them (Haggai 2:4-5)? In the end times when Messiah the King comes, what will God do to the whole creation (Haggai 2:6-9, Revelation 19:11-16)?

9. In Haggai 2:10-19, he contrasts their previous chastening by God with a promise of present blessing for their obedience. What was God's promise in 2:19?

10. In God's last message to Haggai in 2:20-23, He returns to the end times scenario of judgment on the rebellious world and restoration of Israel. What will God do to all the worldly political and military institutions (v 22)?