

HAGGAI

Introduction

Author. The author's name means "festal" which may indicate that he was born during one of the three pilgrimage feasts. He, along with Zechariah, encouraged the returned exiles to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14). If, according to 2:3, Haggai could remember the site of Solomon's Temple he would have been well into his seventies.

Date. Four dates for Haggai preaching are given in the book:

August 29, 520 B.C. oracle #1 Hag. 1:1-11

September 21, 520 B.C. work resumed Hag. 1:12-15

October 17, 520 B.C. oracle #2 Hag. 2:1-9

December 18, 520 B.C. oracles #3,4 Hag 2:10-19

If the book contains all his prophetic messages, his ministry lasted only 15 weeks.

Occasion. When the exiles returned from Babylon they came with a mandate from Cyrus to rebuild the temple. Adversaries arrived on the scene, however, and discouraged the work until it ceased. This sorry state continued for about 15 years until the second year of the reign of Persian King Darius (i.e., 520 B.C.), when the two prophets Haggai and Zechariah appeared. According to Ezra, the Jews prospered and finished the construction of the Temple under the preaching of these two men (Ezra 6:14).

Structure. The book is comprised of a brief introduction, (1:1-2), an historical interlude (11:12-15), and four dated oracles. The book may be outlined around these dates. Please see the outline under Date above.

Message Statement. *The work of rebuilding the temple will bring God's blessing now and in the future.*

Argument

1A ORACLE #1: NEGLECT OF THE TEMPLE IS THE CAUSE OF ECONOMIC DEPRESSION-11

In classic Deuteronomic application Haggai declares that economic decline is a result of spiritual failure. The specific covenantal failure in this instance is neglect of the Temple construction.

- 1B The Problem 1:1-2
 These introductory words summarize the complacency of the people in the words, "the time has not yet come for the Lords house to be built," (1:2). It is clear, due to the dating, that Temple recon struction has laid dormant at this point for over 15 years. These words serve double duty introducing the first oracle and, in a broader sense, the book as a whole.
- 2B The Rebuke 1:3-11
 This section comprises Haggai's first message to the people. It is a simple and direct message of rebuke to the people outlining their misplaced priorities. He explains their economic despair in terms of covenantal disobedience (1:9-11). His advice is equally direct as he states prosaically (1:8), "Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house"
- 2A HISTORICAL INTERLUDE 1:12-15
 This, the only historical interlude of the book, records the response of the people some three weeks after the prophetic first oracle. Immediately upon the peoples' obedient response, God answers their actions with a message of encouragement "I am with you" (2:13).
- 3A ORACLE #2 THE GLORY OF THIS TEMPLE WILL BE GREATER THAN THE FIRST 2:1-9
 As an additional encouragement to the workers, God sends this oracle about three weeks after the work has resumed on the temple. It is designed to offset any discouragement which may have resulted from the comparison of this temple with Solomon's.
- 1B The Reality of the Present 2:10-13
 As the elders of the people (perhaps in cluding Haggai) compar ed the size of the foun dation with that of Solomon's, discouragement was possible. Haggai's articulation of the antici-pated response is "Does it now seem to you like nothing?" (2:3).
- 2B The Encouragement of the Present 2:14
 The encouragement which God gives is twofold. First the reality of God's presence with them (2:4-5) is reason enough to be strong. Their labor had di vine approval. Additionally, in the future God promised to bring to this temple the "desired of the nations" (2:7), a probable reference to Messiah (1 Sam 9:20; Dan. 9:23), so that the house would be filled with glory. Though the glory cloud never returned to this temple, the Messiah would visit it, a strong basis for encouragement to build.
- 4A ORACLE #3: UNCLEANNESS INVALIDATES SERVICE 2:10-19
 The exact situation of these teachings is uncertain. It may be that the people considered their presence in the holy land or their work on the temple to be compensation for their sin. Haggai sternly warns that their service (sacrifices) are rendered unclean because of their sin rather than their service atoning for their sin.
- 5A ORACLE #4: SECULAR KINGDOMS WILL BE REPLACED BY A DAVIDIC KING 2:20-23
 God encourages Zerubbabel, the civil leader and representative of the Davidic line, that one day He would intervene in the affairs of men and shake up the existing order of secular rule (2:21, 22). Once again a Davidic descendant would be God's proxy, God's representative ruler over all the earth (2:23). This would be an encouragement in any event but may also be specifically directed toward any doubt about the succession of the throne of David caused by present cir cumstance (foreign domination, hence Zerubbabel's lack of reign) and the past curse upon the last Davidic

King Jehoiachin (Jeremiah 22:24).

Outline

1A	ORACLE #1: NEGLECT OF THE TEMPLE IS THE CAUSE OF ECONOMIC DEPRESSION	11
1B	<u>The Problem</u>	1:1-2
2B	<u>The Rebuke</u>	1:3-11
1C	The perverted priorities of the people	1:3-5
2C	The resulting discipline	1:6
3C	The solution: build the Temple	1:7,8
4C	The chastisement from God	1:9-11
1D	The calamity	1:9a
2D	The basis	1:9b
3D	The cause	1:10-11
2A	HISTORICAL INTERLUDE	1:12-15
1B	<u>The responses of the people to the message</u>	1:12
2B	<u>The responses of God to the people</u>	1:13-15
3A	ORACLE #2 THE GLORY OF THIS TEMPLE WILL BE GREATER THAN THE FIRST	2:1-9
1B	<u>The Reality of the Present</u>	2:1-3
2B	<u>The Encouragement of the Present</u>	2:4-9
1C	The statement	2:4a
2C	The bases	2:4b-9
1D	God's presence in the present	2:4b-5
2D	Messiah's presence in the future	2:6-9
4A	ORACLE #3: UNCLEANNES INVALIDATES SERVICE	
1B	<u>The Principles</u>	2:10-13
1C	Cleanness is not contagious	2:10-12
2C	Uncleanness is contagious	2:13
2B	<u>The Application</u>	2:14
3B	<u>The Solution</u>	2:15-19
1C	The past	2:15-17
2C	The future	2:18-19

5A	ORACLE #4: SECULAR KINGDOMS WILL BE REPLACED BY A DAVIDIC KING	2:20-23
1B	<u>The Overthrow of Gentile Kingdoms</u>	2:20
2B	<u>The Re-establishment of Davidic Rule</u>	2:21-23