

Cover to Cover: From Genesis to Maps
Sermon # 37– “Haggai”
July 13, 2008

Haggai: The Man

Haggai’s name means “festal”, perhaps indicating that he was born on some major festival or feast day. Haggai is one of only three post-exilic prophets in the Old Testament. (The other two are Zechariah and Malachi.) All three messengers spoke to encourage the spiritual and moral restoration of the returned remnant.

Haggai: The Times

After the Jews’ long sojourn in exile, the Persian King Cyrus had decreed that they finally could return home to Jerusalem. Over 50,000 availed themselves of this opportunity, returning to the land in 538 BC and resettling in and around the holy city. The people began working to rebuild the Temple about 536 BC, but discouragement and apathy soon set in and the construction site lay idle for some 16 years. Then God called forth Haggai (as well as Zechariah) to challenge the people and stir them to action (See Ezra 5-6). The Temple was finally completed in 515 BC.

Haggai: The Message

In this little book, we find four sermons by Haggai. Haggai’s prophecies are the most precisely dated writings in the Old Testament. The first message was given on the 1st day of Elul (August/ September), 520 BC. The second message was delivered on the 21st of Tishri (September/ October), 520 BC. The last messages came on the 24th of Chisleu (November/ December), 520 BC. Haggai’s primary challenge to the returned remnant was to rise up and finish the task that had lain dormant for so long.

The Book of Haggai: An Outline

1. The First Sermon: *It’s Time to Rebuild the Temple!*

A Call to Examination 1:1-15

- Opening call to the rulers. v. 1-2
- General call to the people. v. 3-6
- An explanation for their difficulties: The people have suffered from inverted priorities. They have put self first, God second. v. 7-11

- The people's response: reverence and obedience. v. 12-15
- The assurance of God's help. v. 13

2. The Second Sermon: *The Glory of the Rebuilt Temple will surpass that of Solomon's Temple!*

A Message of Encouragement 2:1-9

- Dealing with human disappointment. v. 1-3
- Strengthened by the promise of God's presence. v. 4-5
- "A Whole Lot of Shaking Going On" v. 6-7a
- The promised Glory of the new House. v. 7a-9

3. The Third Sermon: *Disobedience Produces Defilement, but Obedience Results in Blessing!*

A Promise of Blessing 2:10-19

- A defiled people. v. 10-17
- A blessed people. v. 18-19

4. The Fourth Sermon: *The Lord is Raising Up a New Leader!*

A Word to Encourage the Governor 2:20-23

- There will be more shaking to come. v. 20-22
- Zerubbabel will endure because he has been chosen by God. v. 23
- Zerubbabel is a foreshadowing of Christ.