

Bible Study - Haggai



Introduction

The Book of Haggai is only 2 chapters. It is a powerful, urgent call to **realign spiritual priorities**. God uses Haggai to challenge a complacent nation (Israel) that prioritized personal comfort over divine worship. Because they neglected the temple, they faced severe economic and agricultural drought. Haggai's messages successfully stirred the leaders and the remnant to finish what they started. This study reminds us to put God first in our lives. This study reminds us to keep focused on God's assignment.

Historical Context of Haggai

- **Time Period:** Around 520 BC during the Persian rule over Judea.
- **Setting:** Jerusalem, after the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon.
- **The Situation:** The Second Temple lay in ruins for years because the people stopped building it and focused on their own homes.
- **His Message:** He urged the people and leaders (Zerubbabel and Joshua) to rebuild God's house so they could regain God's blessing and prosperity.

Get to Know Haggai

Haggai was a post-exilic prophet who ministered around 520 B.C. His name means "festal" or "festival." His ministry was directed to the Jewish remnant that had returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity. He was called by God to urge the people to stop prioritizing their own comfort and personal homes, and instead resume the reconstruction of the Temple, which had been left in ruins. He prophesied alongside the prophet Zechariah, emphasizing that placing God's house and priorities first is the true path to blessing and spiritual alignment.

King Darius and God's Sovereignty:

Darius the Great was more than just a historical figure; he became an unexpected instrument of God's will. Despite the opposition the Jewish people faced from local enemies, King Darius searched the royal archives, validated King Cyrus's original decree, and—crucially—ordered that the expenses for rebuilding the temple be paid in full from the royal treasury. This highlights a powerful lesson: God is sovereign over secular rulers and can move the hearts of even the most powerful leaders to provide the resources necessary for His work.

The Reality of "Drought":

Let's try to perceive what the people in Haggai's day were experiencing. The drought was both physical and spiritual. The people were working hard to build their own "paneled houses" (an upgrade from standard living quarters), yet they felt a constant sense of scarcity. This is a timeless lesson on the "law of diminishing returns" in spiritual matters: when we put our own comfort above God's house and priorities, we often find that our labor yields little lasting satisfaction. The spiritual drought was because God's house was in shambles and the people were not hearing the Word or fellowshiping together. This meant little of God's plans could be executed.

Fill-in-the-Blank Study Questions

*All questions are based directly on the **New King James Version (NKJV)** in the book of **Haggai**.*

Chapter 1: The Call to Rebuild

1. In the second year of King Darius, the word of the Lord came by Haggai to _____ the governor of Judah. (1:1)
2. The high priest during the time of Haggai's prophecy was _____ the son of Jehozadak. (1:1)
3. The people said, "The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be _____." (1:2)
4. God asked if it was time for the people to dwell in _____ houses while His house lay in ruins. (1:4)
5. The Lord of hosts gave a command twice in this chapter: "_____ your ways!" (1:5, 1:7)
6. God noted that they earned wages, only to put them into a bag with _____. (1:6)
7. The Lord commanded them to go up to the mountains, bring _____, and build the temple. (1:8)
8. Because God's house was in ruins, everyone ran to his _____ house. (1:9)
9. Therefore, the _____ withheld its dew, and the earth withheld its fruit. (1:10)
10. God called for a _____ on the land, mountains, grain, and new wine. (1:11)
11. When the leaders and the remnant heard Haggai's words, the people _____ the Lord. (1:12)
12. Haggai, the Lord's messenger, delivered this comforting promise: "I am _____ you, says the Lord." (1:13)
13. The Lord _____ up the spirit of the governor, the high priest, and the remnant to do the work. (1:14)

Chapter 2: The Promise of Greater Glory

14. God asked the elders who remembered Solomon's temple, "Who is left among you who saw this temple in its _____ glory?" (2:3)
15. The Lord encouraged Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people to be _____ and work. (2:4)
16. God promised, "Once more... I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and _____ land." (2:6)

17. The Lord declared that the _____ of all nations shall come to His house. (2:7)
18. God claimed His absolute ownership of resources by saying, "The _____ is Mine, and the gold is Mine." (2:8)
19. "The glory of this _____ temple shall be greater than the former," says the Lord of hosts. (2:9)
20. In the final verses, God promised to make Zerubbabel like a _____ ring, for He had chosen him. (2:23)

Reflective Questions

1. In what ways does prioritizing personal comfort, as seen in Haggai 1:4, still manifest in our lives today, and what can we do to shift our focus back to God's priorities?
2. Haggai 1:5 and 1:7 encourage the people to "Consider your ways!" How can regular self-reflection help us identify areas where we might be neglecting our spiritual "temple"?
3. When facing difficult seasons or "droughts" (Haggai 1:11), how can we discern if God is calling us to realign our priorities rather than just weathering the storm?
4. The Lord promises that the glory of the latter temple will be greater than the former (Haggai 2:9). How does this promise offer hope when we feel that our current efforts or circumstances don't measure up to the past?
5. God refers to Zerubbabel as a "signet ring" (Haggai 2:23), symbolizing honor and authority. In what ways does God provide us with a sense of purpose and identity when He calls us to His work?

Answer Key for fill in the blank questions:

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| 1. Zerubbabel | 9. heavens (or sky) |
| 2. Joshua | 10. drought |
| 3. built | 11. feared |
| 4. paneled | 12. with |
| 5. Consider | 13. stirred |
| 6. holes | 14. former |
| 7. wood | 15. strong |
| 8. own | 16. dry |
| | 17. desire |
| | 18. silver |
| | 19. latter |
| | 20. signet |