

I. **NAME AND PERSONALITY OF THE PROPHET.**

- A. The name *Haggai* means “festival” or “festival of Jehovah.”
- B. Haggai is mentioned in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14.
- C. He was contemporary with Zechariah & Nehemiah.
- D. Haggai is a man with one idea: build the temple.
- E. His preaching was authoritative, direct, and earnest.
- F. He preached for just four months, but was very effective.

II. **DATE OF THE BOOK AND OF THE PROPHET.**

- A. It is said to take place in the “second year of Darius the king.”
- B. This places the book historically about 520BC.
- C. Daniel and Ezekiel have already prophesied to the people as they were in Babylonian exile.
- D. A list of the Persian kings:
 - 1. Cyrus (559-529BC), who gave the decree to go back and build the temple.
 - 2. Cambyses (529-522BC), the Bible does not mention this king.
 - 3. Darius (521-486BC), ruled during Haggai’s preaching.
 - 4. Xerxes, also known as Ahasuerus (485-466BC), king during the time (and book of) Esther.
 - 5. Artaxerxes (465-425BC), reigned during the lifetime of Ezra and Malachi.
- E. Some important Jewish events:
 - 1. First return under Zerubbabel and laying the foundation of the temple (536BC).
 - 2. Completion of the temple (516BC).
 - 3. Return under Ezra to restore worship (458BC).
 - 4. Return of Nehemiah to rebuild the wall (445BC).
 - 5. Malachi’s prophecy closes the Old Testament Cannon (about 430BC).

III. **OUTLINES OF THE BOOK OF HAGGAI.**

A. Simple outline:

- I. A message of rebuke--Chapter 1:1-15.
- II. A message of courage--Chapter 2:1-9.
- III. A message of assurance--Chapter 2:10-23.

B. Supplemental outline:

- I. First Message: Rebuke for Neglecting the Temple (1:1-15).
 - A. The prophet and his commission (1:1).
 - B. The selfish indifference of the people (1:2-4).
 - C. The curse resulting from their attitude (1:5-6).
 - D. God’s displeasure with the people (1:7-11).
 - E. The response of the people (1:12-15).
- II. Second Message: Glory of the New Temple (2:1-9).
 - A. God’s blessing to abide with the builders (2:1-5).
 - B. The glory of the new temple to exceed that of the former temple (2:6-9).
- III. Third Message: Condition of Future Prosperity (2:10-19).
 - A. The present uncleanness of the people (2:10-14).
 - 1. Two questions about uncleanness (2:10-13).
 - 2. Application to the people (2:14).

- B. A change in heart will result in a change of their material circumstances (2:15-19).
- IV. Fourth Message: A Glorious Future (2:20-23).
 - A. Surrounding nations to be overthrown (2:20-22).
 - B. The promise of the Messiah to be vouchsafed through the preservation of Zerubbabel (2:23).

IV. THE THEME AND THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF HAGGAI.

- A. The theme of the book is: **build the temple.**
- B. The message of the book is: **God will bless the people, if they will build.**
- C. Haggai 2:10-19 discusses the contagious nature of procrastination.
- D. Haggai 2:7-8 is the eternal nature of God's kingdom.
- E. During the building of the temple the young men will sing for joy, because they will be able to be clean again, while the old men will cry due to the fact that this rebuilt temple is nothing compared to the one they remember (Solomon's) before captivity.

V. PRACTICAL LESSONS OF PERMANENT VALUE.

- A. Faithfulness can be the cause of material prosperity.
- B. Discouragement is not an adequate reason to quit work.
- C. When there is a good work to be done, the time is right now.
- D. Success for the preacher is found in speaking God's Word.
- E. The sin of procrastination is contagious.
- F. God's true kingdom is eternal.

VI. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.

- A. Have you ever undertaken a task with great zeal for the Lord, only later to lose that zeal and grow apathetic? If so, why did you become apathetic?
- B. When, if ever, have you questioned the dependability of God's Word? How would you help someone who was struggling with this?
- C. What guidelines might be useful in determining whether a person is putting too much money and effort into their own dwelling and comfort?
- D. Have you ever seen a task that needed doing and felt like saying to God, "send somebody else"? Explain.
- E. Why is it important to address both the material and the spiritual needs of people? How can your church or community treat both of these concerns as important?
- F. What is essential in order to begin, sustain and encourage the work of God?