

HAGGAI

AN OVERVIEW

Purpose

To call the people to complete the rebuilding of the Temple.

Author

Haggai.

Date

Written between late August and mid-December of 520 BC.

Audience

The Jews living in Jerusalem who had returned from exile.

Setting

The Persian ruler Cyrus the Great (559–530 BC) captured Babylon in 539 BC. His edict in 538 BC permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem so that they might rebuild the temple (Ezra 1–2). But initial work stalled when opposition arose.

Special Features

Haggai was the first of three post-exilic prophets. The literary style of this book is simple and direct, written in prose instead of poetry. Although there are predictions of promised blessing, there are no warnings of judgment in the usual sense.



Key Verses

“Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins? This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says: Look at what’s happening to you! You have planted much but harvest little. You eat but are not satisfied. You drink but are still thirsty. You put on clothes but cannot keep warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!” (1:4-6 NLT)

“And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts...” (1:14 ESV)

Key People

Haggai, Zerubbabel, Joshua.

Key Places

Jerusalem, the Temple.