

Haggai

Time of Writing: King Darius of the Medo-Persian empire began to reign about 522 BC, so Haggai began to prophesy about 520 BC. Cyrus, King of Persia, had issued a decree that all captives could return to their ancestral lands in approximately 536 BC, as predicted in Isaiah 44:24 – 45:7. The duration of service to Babylon had been predicted in Jeremiah 25:11. The original decree may be seen in the British Museum in London. The first Jews returned with Zerubbabel about two years later. Haggai began to prophecy about 10 years after the first return.

Messianic Prophecy Detected by Ancient Rabbis: (2:6 – 7)

Quotations of Haggai in the New Testament: none.

The Plot:

Preface: (Ezra 3) Upon returning, the altar was rebuilt and sacrifices began as in the Law. About a year and a half later, they began to re-lay the foundation of the Temple. (Ezra 4) However, the locals made political trouble resulting in a stop-work order from the king that was based on inaccurate information.

1:1 – 11 (Also Ezra 5 – 6) Apparently, the Jews had not tried to reverse the stop-work order for nearly a decade. Haggai told them that their lack of prosperity was directly related to abandoning the job for which they had returned.

1:12 – 15 Three weeks later, the people got back to work.

2:1 – 9 A month of work passed. Haggai returned to encourage them. The Temple they were building was poor compared to that of Solomon, so they were getting discouraged.

2:10 – 23 After another six weeks, Haggai reminded them to be “clean” while working on the Temple. And, God promised to bring them prosperity from that time forward.

Parallels to the modern Kingdom of God:

1. Does the spiritual Temple need rebuilding? (see 1 Corinthians 3:16 – 17)
2. Do we refrain from rebuilding the spiritual Temple at the first sign of adversity?
3. Do we set about doing it immediately or do we wait for the opportune moment?
4. Do we build with clean hands?
5. What sort of prosperity might we expect?