

# HAGGAI - Chapter 1

Haggai is the prophet whose burden is to see the house of God built. His careful prodding means that something God had clearly spoken about should not be neglected but should be brought into action. Jesus is calling us today to build his church and to make it a priority over our own affairs and interests.

## Prophets bring God's word but also provoke us to obey Him

We are introduced to a formidable trio. Zerubbabel is the son of the governor and he speaks of kingship, rule and authority. Haggai is the prophet and Joshua is the priest.

In the body of Christ all of the ministries - apostle, prophet, teacher, pastor and evangelist - are required to build the church of God. No one ministry can do it.

We need to work together to achieve God's purposes. We have the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to help us.

## The question of timing

The people failed to build because they ignored God's timing.

The issue always is to know God's time. It is not our choice. It may not be a convenient time. It's not when we are in the mood. It's not when we feel ready. It's sensing what the Lord is saying. No excuses! His timing is always perfect.

## The question of priorities

So often, we make excuses as to what needs to be in place before we wholeheartedly do God's work and put him first. We have our own homes to look after. We have our families, our careers, our children and our health. Haggai rebukes God's people, because they have put their own interests before God's.

## The realities of ignoring God

**You have planted much, but have harvested little.**

You work so hard but enjoy little reward.

**You eat, but never have enough.**

**You drink, but never have your fill.**

You are never satisfied, despite seeming to have much.

**You put on clothes, but are not warm.**

You still feel the cold however well you cover yourself.

**You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.**

The money you earn just seems to disappear.

## The matter of judgement

The sad consequences just outlined are all there as disciplines, to make us seek God and ask Him what is wrong. To ignore these things and even complain about God, is sheer foolishness. The pitiful state of affairs described here, is God's kind guidance to lead us to repentance. How stubborn we are, when we blame Him and others.

## The opportunity

On hearing the message the people are humble and wise.

They recognise Haggai has come from God. They do not reject him or his message.

We must also discern when God's servants are bringing us the word of the Lord.

## The people fear the Lord

Their spirits are stirred and, after 18 years of neglecting God's work, they start to build His house.

**Let us always be careful not to neglect God's work for the sake of pursuing our own interests and worldly gain.**

## **HAGGAI - Chapter 2**

**Haggai is the prophet whose burden is to see the house of God built. His careful prodding means that something God had clearly spoken about should not be neglected but should be brought into action. Jesus is calling us today to build his church and to make it a priority over our own affairs and interests.**

### **What was house of God like before?**

The house of God being rebuilt had a glorious past. Looking at it now the workers could be tempted to feel discouraged. They could ask questions and feel overwhelmed by the task. The prophet declares that God is sovereign and He will achieve His purposes. The new work will be even better than the old one. We are part of the better thing that God is doing.

### **A time of shaking**

The prophet moves as it were into another gear. It's not just a physical building. He speaks of a radical work of the Lord in creation and in the nations.

The circumstances on this earth will always cause men's hearts to fear and be faint. Nations against nations. Wars and rumours of wars. Earthquake, famine and plague are no strangers to a fallen world.

### **The desired of all nations will come**

It becomes clear that the prophet is speaking of the advent of Christ himself. Perhaps, because he is moving in the Spirit, we have a picture of Christ's coming as Saviour and also his coming as judge and ruler of the universe, combined into one. Our eternal God sees both events as being very close together. It is us who live in time, who are conscious of a separation between the two events.

Jesus' first coming, paved the way for a people to be bought by his precious blood, out of bondage and darkness. To us who believe, he is precious and highly desirable. He is the one we desperately needed and he does not disappoint us. When he ascended on high, he sent his Holy Spirit and God's people are filled with his glory and joy unspeakable. Both now and after Jesus returns, there will be no resource problems. God will never fail to resource what He is doing. There is peace in God's house now, when his people live in harmony, preferring one another. The peace that passes understanding, is available here and now.

Jesus' second coming, will rescue us from this evil world to take us to a sin-free, sickness-free, death-free environment, where nothing disturbs our peace. Hallelujah!

### **God's chosen people**

The prophet points out that in former times, as now, God's people are defiled and spoilt by sin. God does not overlook our sins and, sometimes, events exist to bring us to repentance. However, God in His holiness, is a merciful God. Even despite us, He will achieve His purposes and, although he never blesses sin, he desires to bless us.

The shaking in the nations will not prevent a remnant emerging, who will be like God's signet ring. Just as an important document can have a seal impressed upon it, so we become a seal that God impresses upon His work and activities in the last days. The complete bride of Christ will be beautiful, washed clean in the word of God and purchased by his blood. Utterly glorious!

**We must put ourselves wholeheartedly into His hands, make His will, our will and His priorities, our priorities. There is no time to waste. We have a glorious future!**

**Rev Richard Brunton**