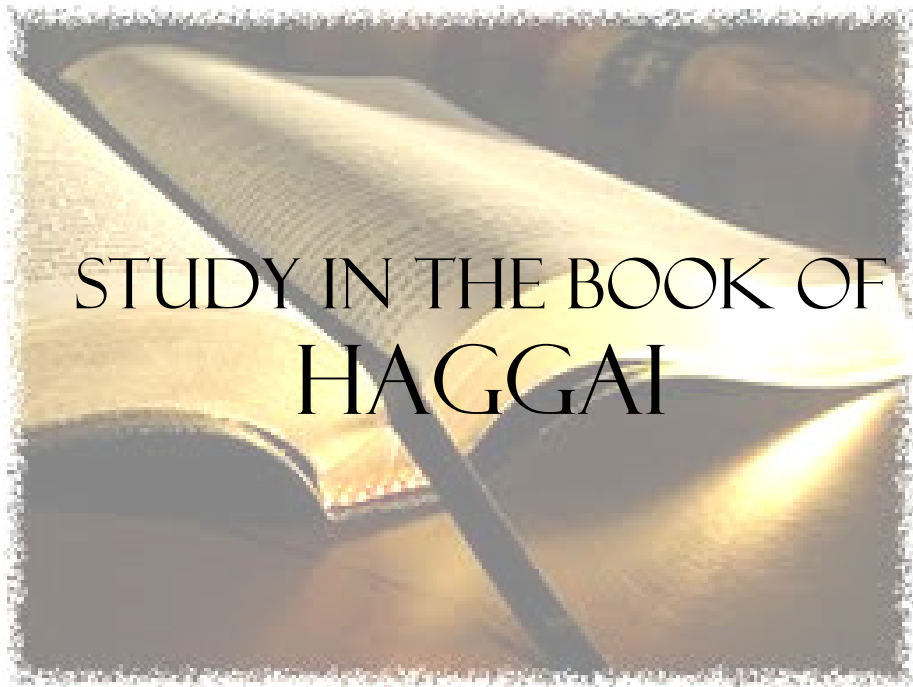


Footprints



CHRISTIAN RESOURCES



By: Bishop Warwick Cole-Edwardes

Footprints into Africa

HAGGAI

STUDY 1

BACKGROUND

Solomon's Temple was completed in 1000B.C. it was burnt to ashes in 588 B.C. by the Caldians; the Jews were taken captive to Babylon after a series of battles in Judah. After 70 years of captivity King Cyrus issued a proclamation for the rebuilding of the temple and so he sent the Jews back to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel, Governor, and Joshua the High Priest. Haggai was a colleague of Zechariah. 50,000 exiles returned to Judah. Haggai was the tenth of the Minor Prophets, he and Zechariah encouraged the people to rebuild the temple.

1.
 - A. **Date**
It is impossible to fix the date. Haggai was about 80 years old when he delivered the message, but some scholars think according to Chapter 2:3 the date of writing was 520 B.C.
 - B. **Author**
Haggai
His name means festive or exuberant one. He was possibly born during a Feast. He was known as the prophet who got results. He was one of the few who saw his prophecies come true.
 - B. **The historical occasion**
The people came back 20 years earlier to rebuild the temple, but gave up when they met opposition from squatters known as the plantation squatters, the lethargy lasted for about 16 years. The ruins of the temple were a nagging reminder of how they had neglected God. Suddenly a message came to them from God, give careful thought to your ways. Haggai was there to motivate the people.
2. **The Message.**
 - A. To rebuild the temple (1:8)
3. **The main theme**
 - A. Sharp rebuke for the neglect to rebuild the Temple. People were more interested in rebuilding their own houses.
 - B. Cheering exhortations and promises to those undertaking the work (2:9)
Encourage the people.
4. **The key verse.**
(2:4) **'But now be strong O Zerubbabel,' declares the Lord. 'Be strong O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong all you people of the land, declares the Lord' and work for I am with you, 'declares the Lord Almighty'**
5. **The response**
 - A. The response was immediate, the people stood up and took note, and in four years the Temple was built. The Temple symbolizes God's presence and Israel's priority.
When the people were obedient, God responded.
6. **Outline of contents**
 - A. A message for Prince and Priest (1:1-2)
 - B. A message for the People (1:3-12)
 - C. A message of encouragement for all (1:13-14)
 - D. A message for Prince, Priest and People (2:1-9)
 - E. An appeal to all for thoughtful meditation (2:10-19)
 - F. A personal message for the Prince as David's Successor (2:20-23)

1:1-2

The sin of not rebuilding the Temple isolated the people from God. The people used opposition as an excuse to stop the work on the temple.

HAGGAI
STUDY 2

(Chapter 1:1-15)

1. A MESSAGE TO PRINCE AND PRIEST (1:1-2)

- A. **The date 520 BC.**
- B. **The message addressed to Zerubbabel and Joshua**
- C. **The rebuke**
- D. **The excuses**

The time had not yet come to rebuild the Temple, the people were too busy to build because it was harvest time and they had to rebuild their own homes.

2. A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE (1:3-12)

- A. **Complacency (v.3-4)**
They were comfortable in their homes while the Temple lay in ruins.
- B. **God's message through the prophet (v.5)**
Consider your ways, give careful thought, no enjoyment from reaping wages.
- C. **A cutting reproof**
The people did not connect their punishment with not rebuilding the Temple.
- D. **Consider your ways (v.5-7)**
- E. **Instruction (v.8)**
Go to the mountains and get timber to rebuild the Temple, God requires obedience but he never forces us.
- F. **Expectations amounted to nothing (v.9)**
God does not leave us to draw false conclusions, the people made strenuous efforts, but forgot that God has the final say.
- G. **God withheld his natural blessings (v.10-11)**
If God withheld His natural blessings we would all perish.
- H. **The reason** - Because the temple was left in ruins.
- I. **The response (v.12)**
The people feared the Lord and obeyed Him, at first they did not fear judgement until they saw their sin.
Message of encouragement.
There was a message of encouragement rather than judgement because the people began to rebuild the Temple.
- J. **The Lord stirred up the spirit of the Governor and Priest and People.**
Evidence of God's presence was soon felt and the people began to rebuild the Temple. God works inside us and alongside us. God encouraged the people and they did His will and rebuilt the Temple.

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STUDY 3

1. A MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO ALL (1:13-14)

Same message but different service.

- A. **The Lord's presence (v.13)**
"I am with you" One of God's divine attributes (**Gen 4:11, Ps 53:1,16:11**)
- B. **The Lord stirred up the Spirit of Zerubbabel, Joshua and all the people (v.14)**
Not only fellow labourers but also God powered.
- C. **The work began on the Temple (v.15)**

2. A MESSAGE FOR PRINCE, PRIEST, AND PEOPLE (2:1-9)

- A. **A comparison between the present and the past (v.3)**
(**Lev.23:34**) The message came at the time of a feast. The older men discouraged the younger men from rebuilding the Temple, they said they would never be able to rebuild it like Solomon did (**Ecc. 7:10**)
- B. **Be strong (v.4)**
Encouragement to go on with the work, do as well as you can. If a leader has a good heart a follower will have a better heart. The presence of God is enough to silence all our fears.
- C. **Do not fear (v.5)**
- D. **God claims complete and supreme control (v.6,7 + 8)**
He is omnipotent, everything belongs to the Lord, He does all things well. God is in control, He uses the shakings for the advancement of His Kingdom.
- E. **God is peace (v.9)**
The glory of the house will be greater than the former one. The vision is wider today, the Prince of Peace has come. Interesting how God encourages the despondent. (**Heb.12:2, Jn 14:1**)

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STUDY 4

INTRODUCTION

1. Chapter 1
2. Chapter 2:1-9
3. Chapter 2:10-19
4. Chapter 2:20-23

1. **AN APPEAL TO ALL FOR THOUGHTFUL MEDITATION (2:10-19)**

This is Haggai's third message. Two months have lapsed since the second message. Only a new love to God will impel the zeal of the people to rebuild the Temple

A. **Careful thought (v.11-15)**

It is one thing to reconstruct the Temple, but it is quite another to remove the contamination caused by rituals and dead religion. The touch of a polluted thing will defile the clean. The touch of the clean cannot purify the defiled (Lev.5:2)

B. **Disobedience (v.16-17)**

The people were polluted with disobedience, they should have repented. When we repent we will receive the grace of God.

C. **God's blessing (v.18-19)**

God's blessing came upon them because they repented, they then rebuilt the Temple. Before the seed is sown Haggai tells them they will have a good harvest because they were obedient and rebuilt the temple. Obedience brings blessing, we shall be known by our fruits.

2. **A PERSONAL MESSAGE FOR THE PRINCE, AS DAVID'S SUCCESSOR.**
(2:20-23)

A. **God's Power (v.20-22)**

A repetition of what had happened before, a display of God's Power (Rom 8:28) Chaldean monarchy had already been overthrown.

B. **God's Promise (v.23)**

God makes Zerubbabel his signet ring, just as Abraham, David and Solomon were selected and so was Zerubbabel. The Lord Jesus is the signet ring on God's right hand.