

# HAGGAI OVERVIEW — SIN KEEPS US FROM DOING GOD'S WILL

## 1 MESSAGE ONE (6th month, 1st day) August 29, 520BC 1:2-15, Putting Self Ahead of the Lord *Elul 1*

- **1:1**, Superscription addressed to leaders in Jerusalem. King Darius is the Medo-Persian king.
- **1:2-4**, God reproved the people of Judah because they delayed rebuilding the temple, and yet they lived comfortably in their paneled homes.

### ☉ 1:5-11, Failure to Rebuild Brought Scarcity and Drought

“Consider your ways” (1:5) literally is “set your hearts on your ways” (1:7; 2:15; 2:18 twice). The Lord asks them to reflect on their conduct in view of their present poverty. They needed to reappraise their priorities, and give God preeminence in their lives (1:5). By neglecting the Lord’s work, they suffered hunger, thirst, and poverty. As long as God’s house was in ruins, they could expect drought (1:6). Their abundant plantings resulted in meager harvests (cf 1:10-11; 2:15-17; 2:19). The most basic necessities of life (food, drink, clothing) were not being met. Their economic condition was like putting money in a bag that has holes in it. This is divine chastisement for disobedience (Lv.26:18-20; Du.28:38-40). All their farming and wage-earning resulted in very little because they did not put the Lord first. We really lose out when we put ourselves ahead of God.

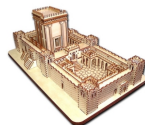
After telling what they had not done, now the Lord tells them what they should do (1:8). That is, to finish building the temple to the glory of God. That they had to bring wood from the mountain could imply they used the wood purchased for the temple (Ez.3:7) to panel their own homes (1:8). Whatever they brought home, the Lord blew it away. So God’s chastening was because of their selfishness. While the temple lay in ruin, they were busy with their own homes. Because of their disobedience the heavens withheld the dew needed for the crops. This brought a drought that effected the three basic crops (grain, new wine, oil) of Israel (1:10-11). Their disobedience deprived both men and cattle (Lv.26:19-20; Du.28:22-24).

### ☉ 1:12-15, The Leaders and People’s Response to the Prophetic Message

The leaders and people obeyed the voice of the Lord, and the message of Haggai (1:12). They also “feared” the Lord. That is, they pondered their past disobedience and received a new sense of divine priority. The Lord encourages them with “I am with you” (1:13). Haggai called the people “the remnant” which are obedient within their covenant relationship with God (1:14), not mere survivors. It is the Lord that stirred them up. The actual work began 23 days since the original prophecy (1:15). (6th month, 24th day; September 24, 520BC)

## 2 MESSAGE TWO (7th month, 21st day) October 17, 520BC 2:1-9, Looking Back Instead of Forward *Tishri 21*

The people were comparing the new temple with the glories of Solomon’s temple. They thought there was no comparison (2:3). The three questions asked are rhetorical, causing the people to realize that their temple is not going to have the spender of Solomon’s. It is implied that some may have been old enough to remember Solomon’s temple that was destroyed 66 years earlier (586BC). When they laid the



foundation (535BC) the older men wept. The Lord encouraged them to “be strong” three times (2:4). God reminded them of their covenant relationship relating it to the Exodus from Egypt. They just had their exodus from Babylon (2:5). The spirit will remain with them while they worked. We must look ahead in faith.

### ☉ 2:6-9, The Future Glory of the Millennial Temple

The Lord encourages them by letting them know He is in control. He will shake the heavens, earth, and nations to accomplish His purposes (2:6-7). This shaking of the nations may refer to God’s gathering the nations for the Battle of Armageddon (Zc.14:1-4). “The desire of the all nations shall come” is a Messianic term that refers to the coming One all the nation’s desire. “This house” refers to the future millennial temple filled with glory. The adornment of the future temple will be provided by the nation’s wealth (2:8). They were building more than a building. It is a spiritual work that will culminate in the Messianic temple. (The Herodian temple is really a continuation of this second temple. The one word characteristic of the future temple will be “peace” (2:9).

## 3 MESSAGE THREE (9th month, 24th day) December 18, 520BC 2:10-19, Failing to Confess our Sins *Kislev 24*

### ☉ 2:11-14, The Ritual Comparing the Corrupt Effect of Sin

Haggai asks the priests a ceremonial question (2:9). The point is that a holy garment could not be transferred to bread, wine, oil, or any food (2:11-12). Yet defilement is transferable to other things like contact with a dead body (Lv.11:28; 22:4-7) (2:13). God said the nation is unclean (2:14). This may refer to their prior condition before rebuilding began.

### ☉ 2:15-19, Promise of Present Blessing Contrasted with Previous Chastening

Their disobedience “before” deserves careful consideration (2:15). Their grain decreased 50%. Their grapes decreased 60%. God smote them with mildew and hail as judgment for disobedience (2:16-17). Yet with all these judgments they still did not return to the Lord (Am.4:9). Haggai reminds them of the day they started to rebuild the temple, yet they are to consider that the effect of the judgment still remains (2:18-19). The people expected material blessings right away. It is not enough to do God’s work. We must do it with pure hearts.

## 4 MESSAGE FOUR (9th month, 24th day) December 18, 520BC 2:20-23, Unbelief *Kislev 24*

This message is addressed to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah to encourage him. Circumstances have a way of discouraging us. Unbelief always robs us of God’s blessings. God will shake the heavens and earth to demonstrate that He is in control (2:20-21). God will overthrow royal thrones of foreign nations (2:22). Gentile kingdoms will be replaced by the God’s Messianic kingdom (Da.2:34-35, 44-45). What work does the Lord have for you to do? Have you started something for His glory, but have not finished it?