

HAGGAI

"Festival of JHVH"

Haggai, possibly of "Haggiah" meaning "Festival of Jehovah."

AUTHOR: Haggai (1:1; 2:1, 10, 20) appears suddenly in 520 B.C. and disappears as suddenly. Nothing is known of his life before or after his preaching. Some scholars think he was born in Babylon and returned to Jerusalem as a member of the group of nearly 50,000 with Zerubbabel (536). Cf. Ezra 1:5-2:70; Nehemiah 12. Others think Haggai was part of a small company who had seen the former Temple of Solomon in its glory (2:3), was carried into exile, and as an aged man, returned to the Promised Land. This would agree with the brevity of his public activity. According to Jewish tradition he was a member of the Great Synagogue.

DATE: B. C. 520 during the rebuilding of the Temple (B. C. 520- 516). Haggai delivered his messages during the second year of Darius Hystaspis (the Great) ruled from 522-486 B.C. He is the first prophetic voice after the Babylonian Exile. He is a contemporary of Zechariah (Ezra 5:1; 6:14), and Confucius. The Temple was completed four years later in 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:14a).

PURPOSE: Solomon's Temple lay in ruins and the neighboring peoples were hostile toward the Jews (Ezra 4:1-5, 24). Haggai comes with a message to encourage the people to finish rebuilding the Temple, which had been delayed for fifteen years.

THEME: God's purposes must have priority over our own things in our lives.

KEY VERSE: 1:8

KEY WORDS: temple, glory, word of the LORD, LORD Almighty

METHOD: is simple with four divisions. It is a message of obedience to God. How does God renew our interest in His work?

STYLE: He is blunt, pointed, and uses brevity, with diction calculated to get attention and produce action. His sentences are short, and without ornate embellishments and arguments. he is described as "prosaic, simple, stern, forceful, plain, telling, profound, earnest" (B. O. Herring).

HISTORICAL SETTING: RESTORATION

Title: Introduction to Haggai

Series: A Look at the Book

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