

HAGGAI - A STUDY GUIDE

THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
- b. Why did He record it for our study?

1. If the 38 verses of Haggai were left out of the Bible would it make any difference to your understanding of God's character, His government, or what He is doing to try to save men? What other Biblical books were written about the same time as Haggai? How long did it take for the people to respond to Haggai's appeals? (Haggai 1:1,14,15; 2:1,10,20) Was Haggai working alone in this project? Haggai is called the "messenger of the Lord" (Haggai 1:13) To whom else do we refer as the "messenger of the Lord?"
2. Why do you think God sent Haggai, Zechariah, Zerubbabel, and Joshua the high priest, and then later Ezra and Nehemiah, to urge the people to get on with the building of the temple, the rebuilding of the walls, and inspire this great revival and reformation, if He knew that not too many years in the future, when His Son came, they would reject Him? What do you understand God to be trying to accomplish during this whole period? And what would this say about God?
3. What were God's objectives in rebuilding the temple if He knew what was coming? If an angel had stopped to ask, "God what are You planning to accomplish through this rebuilding of the temple?" How will you "succeed?" How do you think God would have answered? What would be success in the eyes of an angel at this point in history? What was God waiting for? What is He waiting for now?
4. Is God saying here, "If you don't worship Me, and Me first, I can't bless you?" (Haggai 1:2-11) If so, would that suggest that God is selfish? Who stands to gain the most if we put God first? Why are people blessed when they put God first? Is it because God doesn't like it when they don't put Him first and therefore He withholds His blessings? Or, by putting God first, do we open up ways for God to bless us that would not otherwise be open?
5. In what sense could this latter temple be more "glorious" than the former (Haggai 2:9; compare Ezra 3:10-13)? Which is more impressive to you—the power, glory, fire, and cloud that were manifested in the first temple (2 Chronicles 5:11-14) or the friendship and humble humanity manifested in the second temple? (John 8:2; Matthew 26:55) Which would God prefer to use? Which should stir us more—the infinite power and majesty, or the fact that God seems to want to talk to us through the still, small voice? Are you moved more by the meekness and humility of Jesus as He allowed Himself to be accused and crucified or by the tremendous show of power at the dedication of Solomon's temple? (1 Kings 8:10; 2 Chron. 5:11-14 ; 7:1-10)
6. If the Holy Spirit did not come until Pentecost, what is the meaning of Haggai 2:5 and Zechariah 7:12? (Compare Genesis 1:2; Psalms 51:11) Why did Jesus in His time feel it was necessary to say that He must go away so the Holy Spirit could come? (John 14:16,17,26; 15:26; [16:7](#))
7. In Haggai's day, God had been working with the descendants of Abraham for about twelve hundred years, and yet He still did not seem to have accomplished what He really wanted. Why not? What about in our day? What is delaying His coming today? (Revelation 7:1-3)
8. **Is God continually working toward some sort of long-term goal? If so, what would that be?** What is implied when Jesus, after His life here on earth says, "It is finished?" (John 19:30) What would "finished" mean to an eternal God who is omniscient and omnipresent? Is success for God measured in terms of numbers of loyal followers? In Haggai's day, would the universe be inclined to think that God had lost His influence?

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