

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**12-19-18**

*Haggai 1*

**A Call to Build the House of the LORD - Verses 1-11**

<sup>1</sup>In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabelson of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest: <sup>2</sup>This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD's house.'" <sup>3</sup>Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: <sup>4</sup>"Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?" <sup>5</sup>Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. <sup>6</sup>You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." <sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. <sup>8</sup>Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD.<sup>9</sup>"You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house. <sup>10</sup>Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. <sup>11</sup>I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands."

**1:1** Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest, were key leaders in rebuilding the temple. They had already reestablished the altar, but work on the temple had slowed. Haggai gave a message to these outstanding leaders and to the exiles who had returned from Babylon, encouraging them to complete the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.

**1:1** The Jews who had returned from Babylon in 538 B.C. to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem were not able to finish their work because they were hindered by their enemies. After opposition put a halt to progress, no further work had been done on the temple for over 10 years. In August, 520 B.C., Haggai delivered a message to encourage the people to rebuild the temple. Haggai was probably born in captivity in Babylon and returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1-2). Haggai and Zechariah, two prophets who encouraged the temple rebuilding, are mentioned in Ezra 5:1.

**1:2** Haggai encouraged the people to finish rebuilding the temple. Opposition from hostile neighbors had caused them to feel discouraged and to neglect the temple and thus neglect God. But Haggai's message turned them around and motivated them to pick up their tools and continue the work they had begun.

**1:3-6** God asked his people how they could live in luxury when his house was lying in ruins. The temple was the focal point of Judah's relationship with God, but it was still demolished. Instead of rebuilding the temple, the people put their energies into beautifying their own homes. However, the harder the people worked for themselves, the less they had, because they ignored their spiritual lives. The same happens to us. If we put God first, he will provide for our deepest needs. If we put him in any other place, all our efforts will be futile. Caring only for your physical needs while ignoring your relationship with God will lead to ruin.

**1:6** Because the people had not given God first place in their lives, their work was not fruitful or productive, and their material possessions did not satisfy. While they concentrated on building and beautifying their own homes, God's blessing was withheld because they no longer put him first. Moses had predicted that this would be the result if the people neglected God (Deuteronomy 28:38-45).

**1:9** Judah's problem was confused priorities. Like Judah, our priorities involving occupation, family, and God's work are often confused. Jobs, homes, vacations, and leisure activities may rank higher on our list of importance than God. What is most important to you? Where is God on your list of priorities?

**1:11** Grain, grapes for wine, and olives for oil were Israel's major crops. The people depended on these for security while neglecting the worship of God. As a result, God would send a drought to destroy their livelihood and call them back to himself.

### **Obedience to God's Call - Verses 12-15**

**12** Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD. **13** Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: "I am with you," declares the LORD. **14** So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God, **15** on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month. In the second year of King Darius,

**1:14-15** The people began rebuilding the temple just 23 days after Haggai's first message. Rarely did a prophet's message produce such a quick response. How often we hear a sermon and respond, "That was an excellent point—I ought to do that," only to leave church and forget to act. These people put the prophet's words into action. When you hear a good sermon or lesson, ask what you should do about it, and then make plans to put it into practice.