

- Last week we looked the book of Malachi. We don't know exactly who wrote the book or when, but we know it was sometime after the exile because people were living in the rebuilt Jerusalem then. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malachi> We talked about how the book opens with a statement of how God loves Israel ([Malachi 1:1-5](#)) and the continues a pattern of accusations against Israel. The accusations include how the people and priests allow inferior animals to be sacrificed ([Malachi 1:6 – Malachi 2:9](#)), how the men of Israel were wrecking their families with divorce ([Malachi 2:10 – 3:7](#)) and how they are robbing God by not offering as commanded ([Malachi 3:8-15](#)). The book of Malachi closes with a reminder that all will be recorded (written and remembered) and the “Day of the Lord” will come again. ([Malachi 3:16 – 4:6](#)).
- This week we are going to look at the prophet Haggai including when and what he prophesied.
- Haggai was a prophet delivering God’s message primarily to the Jews in Jerusalem immediately after their return from exile, and while the city was being rebuilt by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah ([Malachi 1:1](#), [Ezra 5:1](#))
- God has Haggai explain that it is not okay for the people to rebuild their houses while the temple lay in ruin. ([Haggai 1:2-4](#))
- God also has Haggai remind the people of the famine that will befall them as they are neglecting the Lord’s work ([Haggai 1:5-11](#)) Here Haggai is quoting from the curses that God had promised Israel were the consequences for not obeying the law ([Deuteronomy 28:38-42](#))
- The people respond, and led by two men named Zerubbabel and Joshua (obviously not the same person as the leader Joshua from much earlier in the Old Testament) the Israelites being rebuilding the temple. ([Haggai 1:12-15](#)).
- Haggai then notes that the temple rebuilding project is not resulting in anything very impressive. God notes through Haggai that this is not anyone’s fault, but that God will cause the nations around them to contribute riches to the construction. ([Haggai 2:1-9](#))
- When God wants to provide something, He will do it, and we should have faith that He will do that. Abraham knew that ([Genesis 22:8 – 13](#)) ([Hebrews 11:17-19](#)).
- God tell Haggai to verify with the priests that an unclean person (from touching a corpse for example) touching a clean thing (like food) would make that thing unclean in turn so he does and the priests confirm that is the case. ([Haggai 2:10-13](#)) This was the law that was established long ago for the Israelites ([Numbers 19](#))
- God says that the Israelites building the temple is the same because they are unclean from so much injustice that the same hands building the temple make the temple defiled. ([Haggai 2:14-19](#))
- Haggai concludes by saying that the God would indicate through signs that he had chosen Zerubbabel as the leader. ([Haggai 2:20-23](#)).

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Haggai

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Questions:

1. Who was Haggai, and when and to whom was his message delivered?
2. According to Haggai, what was wrong with the approach the Israelites were taking to rebuilding their houses?
3. What does Haggai remind the people will happen to them as the consequence for not following God? Where does that come from?
4. How do the people respond to the issue Haggai raises in the question #2 above? Who were their leaders in this activity?
5. What does God say is missing from the new construction effort, and how does He say he will remedy that?
6. What does Abraham illustrate about faith in God's power and promise?
7. What happens when a person touches a corpse and then touches food?
8. What does the clean/unclean analogy have to do with the construction of the temple?
9. How will God indicate He had chosen a leader? Who does Haggai say that will be?

Originally developed by Madison Laird for high school study at the East Foothill Church of Christ in San Jose, CA following a curriculum outline by Aaron Curtis. Edited by Betty Brown of Jackson, TN. Material may be used free of charge without license or royalty. Questions or comments: madison@madisonlaird.com