



## THE MESSAGES OF HAGGAI "The Message of Challenge" Haggai 1:1-15

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God's ancient people rarely responded positively to what the prophets were saying. But when Haggai spoke, the people took note and obeyed. The results were dramatic.

### I. The Characters.

- A. Haggai: a "prophet" (v. 1); "The Lord's messenger" (v. 13). Ezra 5:1; 6:14
- B. King Darius: king of the Persian Empire. See Ezra 5-6
- C. Zerubbabel: governor of Judah; grandson of King Jehoiachin. Jeremiah 22:24f
- D. Joshua: the high priest, joint ruler with the governor under Persian rule.
- E. "The Lord Almighty"—literally "Yahweh of hosts" = "angels" or "armies."

### II. The Circumstances.

- A. The promise of a Davidic Kingdom. 2 Samuel 7:5-17; See Luke 1:32-33
- B. The divided Kingdom; the collapse of Israel; the warnings to Judah. Isaiah; Jeremiah
- C. The defeat of Assyrians and Babylonians; the ascendancy of Cyrus the Persian.
- D. The decree of Cyrus (the prediction of Isaiah 44:28-45:7, 13). Ezra 1:1-4
- E. The return of the exiles; the plans for rebuilding the Temple.
- F. The opposition and eventual discouragement of the rebuilders. Ezra 4:1f
- G. The arrival and challenge of Haggai and Zechariah.

### III. The Challenge.

- A. "This is what the Almighty says":
  - 1. The people say it is not the time to build the Lord's house...been there 18 years!
  - 2. The people have plenty of time to build their own houses...and panel them!
  - 3. The people need to "give careful thought to (their) ways."
    - a. Their lives are a disaster.
    - b. They are deeply discouraged and disillusioned.
    - c. They had high expectations because of pre-exilic prophecies?
    - d. Their condition was directly related to their behavior. See Deuteronomy 28:15f
  - 4. The people needed to get their act together and revise their priorities.
- B. This is what the people did:
  - 1. They recognized the authenticity of the "voice of the Lord."
  - 2. They took courage from the promise of the Lord's presence in their midst.
  - 3. They allowed their spirits to be stirred by the Lord.
  - 4. They set to work in obedience to the Lord's commands.

**Points to Ponder:** Do my priorities need revision? Does my obedience need a review?