

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

HAGGAI 1

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The name "Haggai" means "Festive, a joyful occasion." His name is a name that arises from hope and the promise of a better tomorrow. Haggai is usually associated with another prophet who was a contemporary of his, Zechariah. The prophet's messages to the nation were given over a period of four months and called the nation to action. Haggai saw a rapid response and obedience to the words God had spoken through the prophet. It took only three weeks from the time that Haggai spoke the words of God until Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest, along with all the people, took up the work of repentance and began the great work to rebuild the temple that had been destroyed sixty-six years earlier.

The background of the prophecy of Haggai is of utmost importance if we are to understand the storyline of this portion of the prophets. As Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Huldah, the prophetess, and others had predicted, the judgment of God had come upon the southern kingdom of the nation of Israel called Judah. In 605 B.C., the first phase of captivity and exile took place under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar. This first phase included the taking away and exiling of Daniel, Hananiah,

Mishael, and Azariah. A puppet king had been set up, but that did not last long. The Babylonians returned in 597 B.C. and took everyone else in Judah captive.

Nebuchadnezzar left only the poorest of the poor and rejected of the day to tend and keep the land. In a final blow to the land after the rebellion of those left behind, the Babylonians returned to Judah and Jerusalem and destroyed the beautiful temple built by King Solomon. Israel had been without a central worship center for almost 70 years, the time prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah for the people to be in exile.

Haggai called the people to repentance, to action, to obedience, and commitment to the task placed before them. In chapter one, Haggai instructed the people to "Consider their ways!" and to understand that they had not finished their assigned task. They had started well but had not finished well. They needed to get on with the work!

Prayer and Action Steps

It is not enough to begin well. God wants all His children to finish well. Jesus finished the assignment from the Father. If we are to be like Jesus our LORD, we must finish well too.

Date _____ Scripture _____

- Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.
- Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.
- Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing?

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act? _____

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions? _____

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible? _____

