



Summary of Haggai

Chapter One

The opening establishes the characters and context of the book. The Lord, prophet, king, priest, and people figure prominently as the major problem is presented, which is that the Lord's house is in ruins and the people are doing nothing about it.

In the second word to Haggai, the Lord asks his hearers to consider whether their prosperity, such as it is, brings about the intended satisfaction, and he exhorts them to supply materials for 'my house' (vv.3-11). A general response follows and rebuilding the temple recommences.

Chapter Two

Haggai bolsters flagging spirits in the fourth message. Comparing the past glory of the temple with the present ruins brought inevitable discouragement (vv.1-3). The people are called to act based on the past (vv.4-5). As God moved Israel to build the tabernacle, so he will now move among the nations to provide for the restoration of his house (vv.6-9).

In the fifth message, the Lord uses an analogy of ritual holiness and defilement to compel reflection upon the actual status of the people before him (vv.10-14), consideration of that status and its relation to past agricultural failures before temple restoration (vv.15-17), and consideration of their experience since rebuilding of the temple began (vv.18-19).

The sixth and final message from the Lord to Haggai complements the previous word and comes on the same day. Consideration of the past and present (vv.10-19) shifts suddenly to a future royal vision of trembling creation, overthrown kingdoms, and perishing armies. Ultimately, the vision comes to focus upon the actions of the divine King whose hand bears, as a signet ring, the promise of David's house restored in the person of Zerubbabel. Seven times in this short section the Lord is the acting subject.