

HAGGAI



THE CHALLENGE HAGGAI

- OUR CHOICES MATTER.
- THE OBEDIENCE OF GOD'S PEOPLE IS PART OF HOW GOD WORKS IN THE WORLD.
- THIS SHOULD MOTIVATE HUMILITY & ACTION.

Created by the Bible Project

2:1-9 ADDRESSING SHATTERED EXPECTATIONS

ONE MONTH LATER

ELDERLY WHO REMEMBER SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

REMEMBER THE PROMISE OF GOD'S FUTURE KINGDOM!

NEW JERUSALEM

NEW TEMPLE

THE NATIONS JOIN GOD'S KINGDOM (SEE ISAIAH 9 & 60-62, MICAH 4-5)

1:1-15 ACCUSATION & RESPONSE

AUGUST 520 BC

THE TEMPLE

ARE YOUR HOUSES MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR ALLEGIANCE TO GOD? (1-4)

IT'S NOT TIME TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE! (4-5)

THIS IS COVENANT TREASON! (SEE LEVITICUS 24:10-16)

THE PEOPLE SET TO WORK (SEE EZRA 5:1-2)

JOSHUA & ZERUBBABEL

2:10-19 CALL TO COVENANT FAITHFULNESS

TWO MONTHS LATER

A CONVERSATION ABOUT RITUAL PURITY (REMEMBER LEVITICUS)

THE WILDERNESS GENERATION

THE EXILED GENERATION

THE UNFAITHFULNESS-RUN

ONLY TRUE OBEDIENCE & REPENTANCE & COVENANT FAITHFULNESS WILL LEAD TO THE COMING OF GOD'S KINGDOM & BLESSING

YES! ...IS THE FOOD IMPURE TOO?

THIS GOD'S RITUALLY IMPURE NO BODY...

THAT'S WHAT THESE PEOPLE ARE LIKE:

IMPURITY, INJUSTICE, IMPURITY

2:20-23 FUTURE HOPE OF GOD'S KINGDOM

THAT SAME DAY

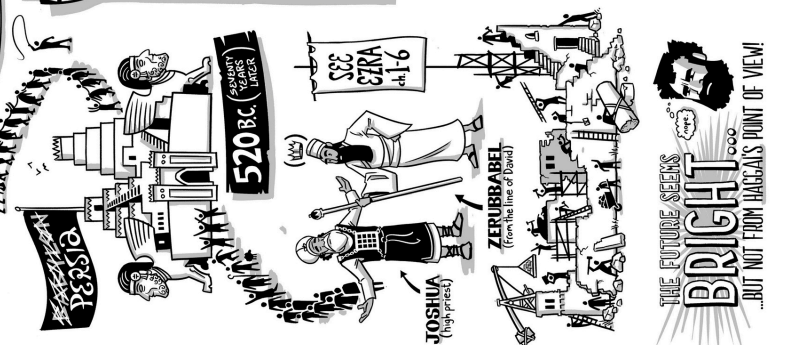
ESTABLISHMENT OF MESSIANIC KING (ZERUBBABEL?)

DEFEAT EVIL AMONG THE NATIONS

NEW JERUSALEM

WILL HAGGAI'S GENERATION EXPERIENCE THE FULFILLMENT OF THESE PROMISES? IS ZERUBBABEL THE MESSIAH?

KEEP READING!



PERSIA ARRIVES ON THE SCENE

- By the time that Persia was threatening Babylon, Nabonidus was frequently gone from the capital, and his son Belshazzar was in de facto control.
- In 539, Belshazzar received a word from God during a drunken orgy that the Medes and Persians were on their way to bring an end to his reign. (described in the book of Daniel).
 - Belshazzar recognizes the inevitability of this judgment and honors Daniel by making him 3rd in command in the kingdom after Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar II.
- Nabonidus is taken prisoner by Gubaru, the Persian general and Belshazzar is killed.
- Two weeks later, Cyrus marches in and ends the Babylonian empire (Oct 29, 539BC).

PERSIA ARRIVES ON THE SCENE

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- Daniel refers to Gubaru as "Darius the Mede" and "Darius son Xerxes".
 - Darius is made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom (9:1).
 - Cyrus saw Daniel as an able administrator who had served for more than 60 years.
 - He was appointed as one of the three supervisors over the empire's provincial system.
 - Darius planned on elevating Daniel to the very top of his government.
 - Daniel's peers, however, concocted a scheme that obliged the king to sentence Daniel to death.
 - Daniel is delivered, and Darius acknowledges the sovereignty of Yahweh.

CYRUS' POLICY

- Cyrus followed a policy of allowing captive peoples to return to their homes.
- He preferred to maintain the status quo in the lands he conquered.
- He recognized the claims of the native gods over their own followers and made no moves to supplant them with his own.
- In fact, he seems to indicate in his cylinder (decree) that he came to Babylon at Marduk's prompting.
- Cyrus afforded to Yahweh the same deference he paid to Marduk and other native gods.
- The Jews had to be allowed to return to their homeland. Only a restored temple in Jerusalem would allow Yahweh to function effectively as God of Judah.



CRYUS' DECREE

- 2 Chronicles 36: 22-23

- Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.'"

- Ezra 1:1-4

- In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem."

FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

- Jeremiah 25:11-13

- This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then, after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste.

- Isaiah 44:24, 28; 45:13

- Thus says the LORD your redeemer.... Who says of Cyrus, "he is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purposes; saying of Jerusalem, 'she shall be built' and of the temple 'your foundation will be laid.'... He shall build my city and set my exiles free."

REMEMBER BACK TO DANIEL

- It was in 539 (during the 1st year of Darius) that Daniel realized that the 70 years that Jeremiah prophesied were about to expire, and the people would return to rebuild the temple.
- Cyrus' decree was about to be issued, and people would be returning to Jerusalem.
- Daniel saw the exile as still in effect as long as the temple was unrestored.
- He prays that God would look upon the temple with favor and dwell there once again.
 - *"Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name."* (9:17-19)

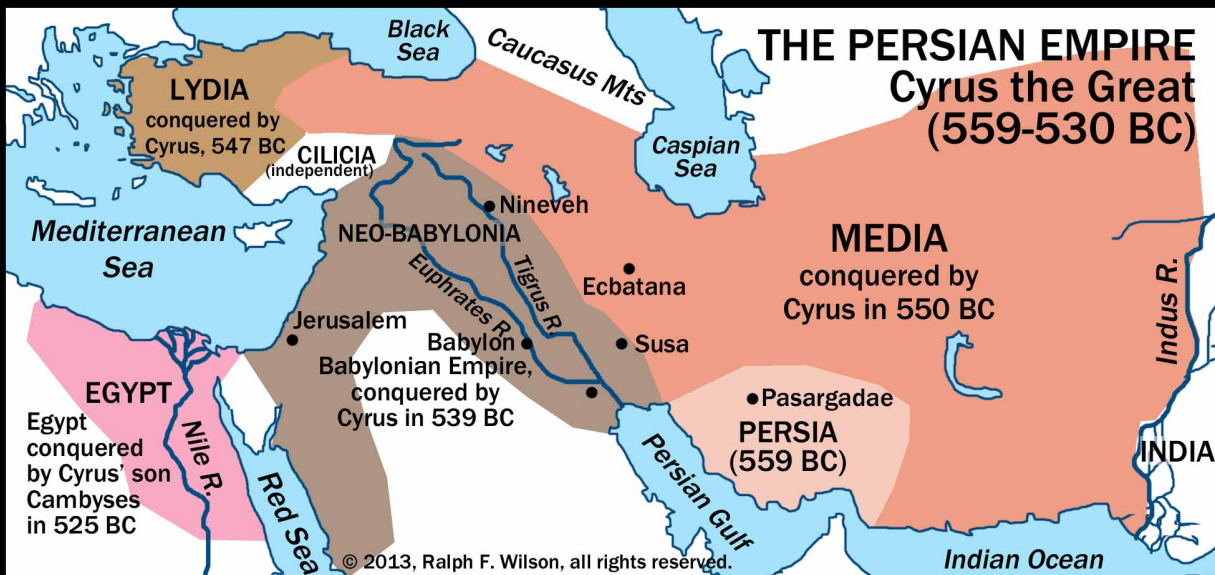
REMEMBER BACK TO DANIEL

- The answer to this prayer would come with the work of Ezra and Nehemiah and the prophetic work of calling the people to rebuilding, done by Haggai and Zechariah.
- The even greater response was Yahweh's promise that at the end of 70 sevens (or seventy weeks of years), he would do something far more wonderful than rebuild the temple.
 - He would send the Anointed One, the Messianic savior who would die for his people and put an end to the ages-long opposition to the purposes of God.



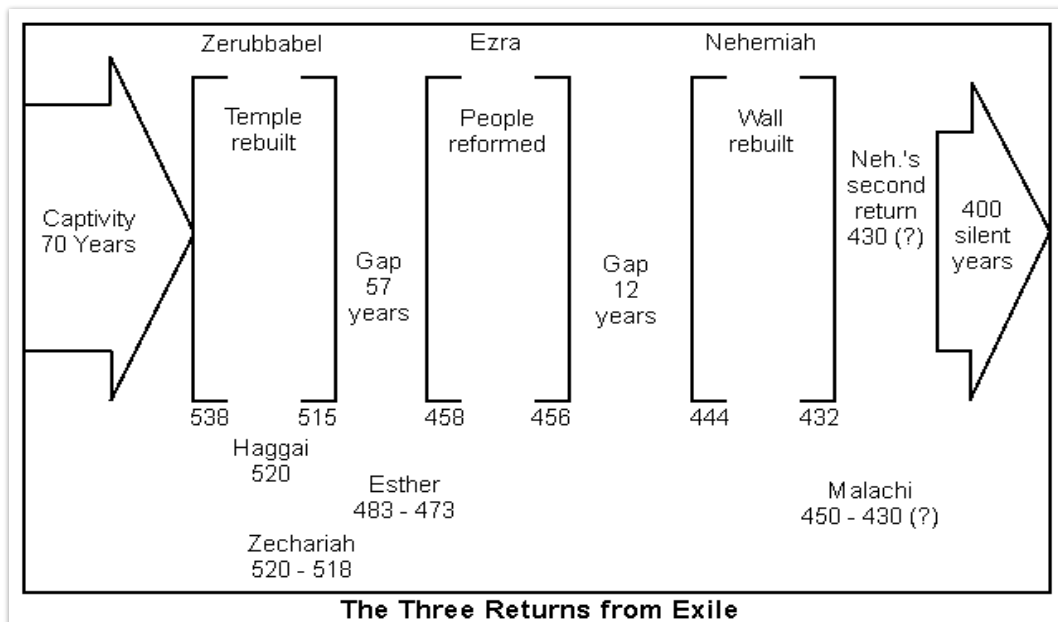
THE MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE 4-6TH CENTURY B.C.

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THREE RETURNS FROM EXILE

- **538:** First Group returns under Zerubbabel which rebuilt the temple.
- **458:** Second group of Jews returned in 458 B. C. They were led by Ezra, a scribe of God's law. Ezra focused on reorganizing temple worship.
- **444:** Third group to return were led by Nehemiah in 444 B.C. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.



THE PEOPLE RETURN TO JERUSALEM

- While Ezra himself did not return until 458, he has some excellent sources about what happened before his own return, so it is in Ezra that we find the most information about the first return.
- Ezra also tells us that Cyrus not only permitted them to return but also stipulated that they must be assisted in every way possible.
- The temple treasures that Nebuchadnezzar had taken were turned over to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, who was appointed governor.
 - 1 Chron 3:18 mentions Shenazzar as one of the sons of Jehoachin.
- The 1st wave of returnees was said to have numbered 42, 360, and 7,337 servants led by Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1:5-11) in 538/537.

- The foundation for the new temple was laid in the early days of Sheshbazzar's administration (Ezra 5:16).
 - However, the enthusiasm waned once it became apparent that Persian and Samaritan opposition was not temporary.
 - The people were also unhappy that the temple would not meet the vision of Ezekiel's temple.
- Zerubbabel became the new governor after Sheshbazzar's death, and Jeshua was his priestly counterpart.
- Both Haggai and Zechariah inspired the community to undertake a second reconstruction project (520BC).
 - An appeal to Darius was successful when it was determined that Cyrus had permitted them to rebuild the temple.

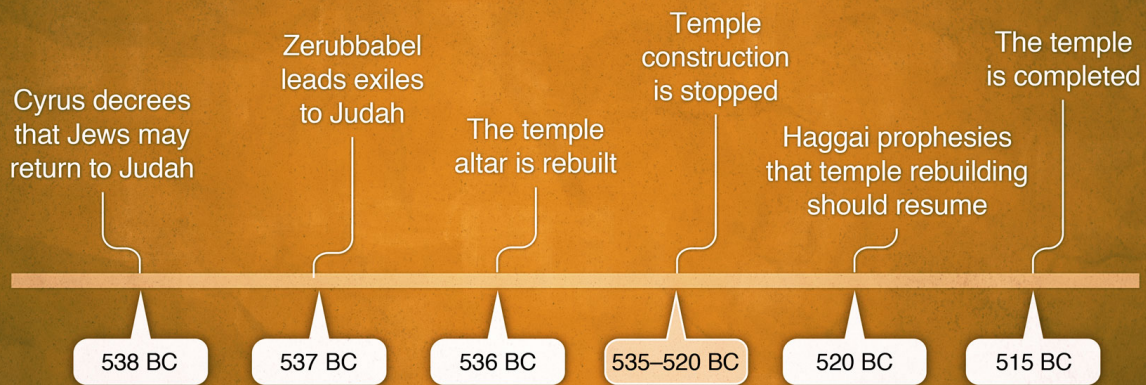
- Although the people were back in their land, the population of Judah was quite mixed, and the Jews were no longer politically defined as their own nation.
- One of the issues was now how the Jews define themselves in relation to others who live in the same region?
- Ezra seems to emphasize that Judaism need not suffer because of changed circumstances. Both Cyrus and Darius afforded the Jews the rights and support to practice their religion.
- The completion of the temple was finally completed in 515BC (25 years after the foundations were laid) (see Ezra 6:13-22).
- The story of Zerubbabel and Haggai ends abruptly. Zerubbabel is mentioned in Zechariah, but it seems likely that he was either removed from leadership or executed as Darius sought to consolidate control.

HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, AND MALACHI

- Haggai and Zechariah are contemporary prophets (520).
- Combined with Daniel, Malachi (and possibly Joel), they compose the OT corpus of prophetic literature about the Persian period.
 - **Haggai**- exhorted the Jews to rebuild the temple and reinstitute the liturgical calendar.
 - **Zechariah**- called for spiritual renewal among the people.
 - **Malachi**- stood against idolatry, easy divorce, and social injustice.
- Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are the historical books that also give us a glimpse into the Persian period.
- Jewish tradition places Malachi, Haggai, and Zechariah as members of the Great Synagogue.
 - The Council of Scribes and other leaders was tasked with reorganizing religious life and culture after the exile.
 - Influential in compiling the minor prophets to be included in the Hebrew Canon.

TIMELINE

HAGGAI



*All dates are approximate

HAGGAI

- **NAME:** means festal, a word associated with celebration.
 - There is a reference to the fact that Haggai had seen Solomon's temple (2:3); he may have been significantly aged.
- **PURPOSE:** to initiate construction of the temple in Jerusalem when the Jews returned from exile. Haggai sought to remind the people of their responsibilities, obligations, privileges, and promises of the covenant.
- **KEY IDEAS:**
 - The importance of establishing proper priorities.
 - The temple holds significant value as a covenant symbol for Israel.
 - The faithfulness of God in renewing his covenant promises to David's descendants.

THE WRITING OF HAGGAI

- Haggai is called both a “prophet” and a “messenger”.
- Haggai’s four messages were delivered in Jerusalem during 4 months during the 2nd year of the reign of Darius (Persia).
- It is assumed that Haggai penned his own prophecy.



HAGGAI’S MESSAGE

- **1:** rebukes the community of exiles for their preoccupation with their personal comforts while the temple remained in ruins.
- **2:** called the people to repentance and challenged them to honor the Lord by rebuilding his temple.
 - Used the phrase “give careful thoughts to your ways” to suggest a change in the relationship with God.
 - Deut 32:46 he said to them, “Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law.
- Haggai is calling the Jews to renew the covenant with God.
 - “Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.¹³ Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke to the people with the LORD’s message, “I am with you, declares the LORD.” And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.” (1:12-15)

HAGGAI'S MESSAGE

- **3:** revealed God's intention to overthrow the nations and restore the fortunes of Israel.
 - The reminder that divine justice was still in effect fortified the people and called them back to faith.
- **4:** promises to establish Zerubbabel as a "signet ring" in Zion rekindled Messianic expectation.
 - The terms "my servant" and "chosen" link to the same concept of the Messiah in Isaiah (41:8, 42:1).
 - The signet is also a symbol of royal authority. Zerubbabel's description as the "signet of the LORD" signifies that the Lord had cancelled the curse pronounced by Jeremiah on Jehoiachin and his descendants (Jer 22:24-30).
 - This meant that the Judahite messianic lineage had been resumed (Gen 49:10).

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

- Each of the four messages is dated to a day and month during Darius's 2nd year of rule over Persia.
- Haggai and Zechariah dated their prophecies so precisely because they understood the rebuilding of the temple as the cornerstone of the long-anticipated messianic age.
- They wanted to make sure they were known to be during Persian rule in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies about the importance of the Persians (and Cyrus specifically).
- The repetition of the phrase "thus says the LORD" 29 times during these four messages (2 chapters) creates a sense of urgency and gravity.

- Messages set up in a A/B/A/B structure.
 - The first and third messages start with “this is what the LORD almighty says” and discuss the current drought and conclude with a curse or warning.
 - The 2nd and 4th messages both close with the expression “declares the LORD almighty” and promise a shaking of creation and predict blessing and restoration for Israel.
- Other examples of Haggai's literary skill.
 - 9 different variations of the messenger formula.
 - Use of chiasms.
 - Frequent wordplay (ruin, drought).
 - Use of rhetorical questions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TEMPLE

- By the time of Jeremiah, the temple had become a “lucky charm”.
- The people assumed that mere association with the Temple meant protection and security.
- Jeremiah cautioned against such a simplistic viewpoint, and Ezekiel sees the glory departing from the temple before it is destroyed.
- The message of Haggai to rebuild the temple to receive the covenant blessings wasn't in contrast to Jeremiah's message because it was based on the calling of people to proper worship of and relationship to Yahweh.
- Haggai believed that reverence, humility, and obedience would accompany the rebuilding of the temple.
- The 2nd temple would then again symbolize the covenant presence of Yahweh among his people.