

MONDAY
20 SEPTEMBER
Ezra 1:1-6
Psalm 126
Luke 8:16-18

TUESDAY
21 SEPTEMBER
Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Proverbs 3:13-18
Psalm 119:65-72
2 Corinthians 4:1-6
Matthew 9:9-13

WEDNESDAY
22 SEPTEMBER
Ezra 9:5-9
Canticle: Song of Tobit or Psalm 103:1-6
Luke 9:1-6

THURSDAY
23 SEPTEMBER
Haggai 1:1-8
Psalm 149:1-5
Luke 9:7-9

FRIDAY
24 SEPTEMBER
Haggai 1:15b – 2:9
Psalm 43
Luke 9:18-22

SATURDAY
25 SEPTEMBER
Zechariah 2:1-5. 10-11
Psalm 125 or Canticle: Jeremiah 31:10-13
Luke 9:43b-45

REFLECTION

The theme of revelation seems to run through this week's Gospel readings, giving us a lot to think about. Firstly, Jesus tells us that



there is nothing secret or hidden away that won't be revealed by God's light. Then the Pharisees disapprove of Jesus mixing with the wrong sort of people, failing to understand that he is in fact mixing with those who know they need him. Who do we mix with? Do they include those who need God's love and mercy?

The disciples are empowered to take God's good news to distant strangers. Are we ready to follow their example?

Herod wonders who Jesus is. Do we need to spend more time getting to know Jesus better and then to proclaim that he is indeed "the Messiah of God," who saves us by his love?

The disciples don't understand what Jesus says about his suffering and death, and they barely hear what he says about rising again. And what about us? Do we live in the blazing light of resurrection or are we still trying to keep things hidden? Do we remember that Jesus comes to us in his mercy, because we need him and he loves us?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we thank you for coming to us in our need.
 Thank you for loving us and teaching us to live in your light,
 the light that cannot be overcome by darkness.
 Keep us close to you and keep us trusting always in your love, truth and mercy.

01420 88222 www.rpbooks.co.uk rp@rpbooks.co.uk @redemptorist

FSC logo

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

PART XXXVII – HAGGAI – A BOOK ABOUT REBUILDING AND RESTORATION

Georgina Byrne continues our book-by-book series about the Bible.

"The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity." Haggai 2:9

What does it say about the faith of a nation when its primary place of worship is in disrepair? This is the question underlying the short book of Haggai. The answer is a call to rebuild and restore.

Haggai, a prophet about whom we know nothing beyond this book, speaks to a very particular time and context. Large numbers of the population had been taken from Judah into exile in Babylon in 597 BC and again in 586 BC. Nearly fifty years later, in 538 BC, King Cyrus had allowed the exiles to return home. It is implicit in the text that this return was not the glorious triumph they had hoped. After many years away from home, the people had set about rebuilding, but they were not flourishing. "You have sown much," Haggai says, "and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill."

Understandably, perhaps, they have put their energies into their homes, but God's house still stands in ruins. God, Haggai tells them, is not impressed. Indeed, Haggai says that as long as God's house is so dishonoured, their harvests will be poor and prosperity will elude them.

Haggai brings together state and religion to rebuild the Temple. Zerubbabel is the governor of Judah and Joshua is the high priest. Together they are to stir the people to action. God will work with them, shaking the heavens and the earth and the land and sea, so that treasure may be found. The house will gleam with silver and gold and will, God promises, be even more glorious than the old Temple they remember.

The intimation that a splendid temple will lead to national prosperity might be troubling for us, especially after the calls for justice rather than worship in earlier prophetic texts. But Haggai is really reminding his hearers to honour the presence of God in their midst. Their true comfort will be found in renewed faithfulness to the covenant.

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by Caroline Hodgson and Heather Smith



Sixteenth week after Trinity

Monday 20 September to Saturday 25 September 2021

WEEK