



The Book of the Twelve Haggai and Zechariah

Interpreting the Text:

1. What differences do you notice between reading prophetic books like Amos and Hosea, to reading books like Haggai and Zechariah? Does anything in particular stand out to you?
2. Many of these later prophetic works develop and build on themes present in the earlier texts. What continuity, if any, do you see in these later books?
3. Many of the prophetic texts preserved for us from the 4th century BCE support the establishment of the priesthood and temple complex as the ultimate center of cultural power. What do you make of this? What might a dissenting prophetic text look like in this context?
4. As history progresses, we see a shift in these prophetic texts from visions of a mundane, political reordering to a cosmic, apocalyptic, eschatological reordering of all creation. Why do you think this is the case? What is the difference?

Applying the Text:

1. If you were to write a new prophetic text in our modern era, that pulled from imagery and traditions found throughout the Book of the Twelve, what might it look like? How would the horizons of God's dominion change? What images would endure, and which would be repurposed to speak to your present circumstances?
2. Haggai's message emphasizes that if the people want to see change in their own lives, they must focus on rebuilding God's temple. In what ways do you think that message might be helpful to a community today, and how might it be harmful?