

# “Forthtelling” Prophecy

**Directions:** In some cases, we have provided some suggested answers in italics, in a bullet. Please allow the group to come up with their own answers before sharing that information.

1a. Have someone read Haggai 1.3-5.

1b. Some of Haggai’s prophecies do not foretell anything about the future. Instead, Bible scholars say they were “forthtelling.” Based on Haggai 1.3-5, what do you think that means?

☛ *[Note: in the sermon we said it meant calling the people back into right covenant relationship with God.]*

1c. How does God call people back into right relationship with him today?

☛ *[Note: God might use some combination of pulpit preaching, Bible study, conviction directly from the Holy Spirit, the prophetic exhortation of a fellow Christian.]*

2a. Have someone read Haggai 1.3-7.

2b. From this passage, what are one or two characteristic of this type of prophecy?

☛ *[Note: they should come up with at least God questioning/criticizing the people’s behavior and God explaining the punishment or discipline he will bring or has brought.]*

2c. Even if God does not give us a direct prophecy like this today, is there a place in church ministry today for these aspects of forthtelling prophecy?

☛ *[Note: hopefully they think so; the pastor should be preaching the same truths from scripture; pastor/elders should be shepherding the flock, which includes confronting sin and warning of its dangers; all of us care for each other and provide accountability based on scriptural truth.]*

3a. Have someone read Haggai 1.8.

3b. From this verse, what is another characteristic of this type of prophecy?

☛ *[Note: God gave them a specific act of repentance to carry out.]*

3c. Today, we would call this an application step. Why in most cases must a preacher be careful to suggest application steps rather than command them?

☛ *[Note: the preacher presents God’s Word as absolute truth; his interpretation of it cannot be absolutely certain of being accurate, so he presents it with educated authority, but not as revelation itself; the application, if not specified in scripture for Christians, is merely his idea, and thus is perhaps a wonderful suggestion, but not mandated by God.]*

4a. Have someone read Haggai 1.12.

4b. What are the two things the people did in response?

4c. Does this sound like a good response or a bad response by the people, and why?

☛ *[Note: the people responded with obedience and reverence. This represented true repentance, a change in behavior and attitude.]*

4d. What usually comes first, a change in attitude or a change in behavior, and why?

5a. Have someone read Haggai 1.13.

5b. Why would this have been an important mini-prophecy for the people?

- ☛ *[Note: answers might include it provided assurance of God's continued love and protection; it encouraged the people to walk with God and rebuild the temple.]*

5c. Do we have any such prophetic encouragements and assurances today?

- ☛ *[Note: Matthew 28.20; Romans 8.9; 1 Corinthians 3.16 are all good verses to consider.]*

6a. Have someone read Haggai 1.14.

6b. How did the people respond to this encouragement and assurance?

- ☛ *[Note: they got excited and they got to work.]*

6c. What can we do to ensure God's assurances to us stir us up in this way?

7. Is there anything else you want to discuss about forthtelling prophecy or the prophecy in Haggai 1 or 2.10-19?