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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Getting our Priorities Straight A Study of Haggai

Date	Lesson	Text
01/03	Introduction	
01/10	Conviction	1:1-15
01/17	Courage	2:1-9
01/24	Cleanliness	2:10-19
01/31	Consumation	2:20-23
02/07	Summary & Review	

Food for Thought

Single-Minded Devotion to Christ

Searching to know life's true meaning?
You'll find it in only one way:
Serving the Lord with commitment
And living for Him day by day.
Jesus gave His all to save us—
are we giving our all to serve Him?

*Reaching forward to those things
which are ahead, I press toward
the goal.*

Phil 3:13-14 (NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread" May 4, 2001)

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF HAGGAI

The Jews had been in captivity in Babylon for 70 years (Jer. 25:11f.) They were first deported in 606 BC. and the final destruction of the temple was in 586. When the Persians defeated the Babylonians in 539, Darius took over and changed the foreign policy concerning captive peoples. In 538 he decreed that the Jews could return to their homeland and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1-3). After an initial stage of construction on the foundation (Ezra 3:8-13), opposition from without and within stopped the work for a period of 14 years. With the work on the temple halted, the people began to pursue their own selfish interests and once again began to experience the discipline of God upon their lives (Hag. 1:7-11).

God used Haggai and Zechariah to get the leaders and the people to once again focus on the work of God. Through the leading of God, the ministry of the prophets, the decree and the funding of Darius I, and the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest, the rebuilding of the temple was resumed and completed in 516 BC., exactly 70 years after its destruction. Does anyone know the significance of being in captivity for 70 years? If you will remember, as part of the law, God told the people to let the land rest every seventh year. Did they do it? No. They were in the land 490 years and never observed the Sabbath year for the land. How many Sabbath years did they miss? Seventy. So God made up for it by taking all the Sabbath years at one time. 606 first invasion / 586 final invasion and destruction of the temple 536 first return / 516 temple finished. Either way you figure it (from the people or the temple) you have 70 years of captivity. You would almost think God was in control. The point is this: We can do it the easy way or the hard way, but either way, God will get His way. That's why it is important for me to have my priorities right and put obedience to God first.

How do you know if you have your priorities straight? And if you don't, What do you do about it? I think Haggai can give us some help in determining the answers to these questions.

Message Statement: Misplaced priorities in our lives can be diagnosed and treated.

Transition: So now that we understand how Haggai fits into the history of Israel, what is the Purpose of Haggai? It was to get the people to rebuild the temple - to get the people to resume construction on the temple.

HAGGAI

First Sermon	Second Sermon	Third Sermon	Fourth Sermon
1:1-15	2:1-9	2:10-19	2:20-23
Conviction	Courage	Cleanliness	Consumation
Rebuke	God's Presence	Defilement	Sovereign King
Reminder	God's Peace	Dependency	Signet king
Response			

(Adapted from "Haggai" by Hampton Keathley)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

The Book of Haggai

AUTHOR: Haggai, "the prophet of the temple," who was reputed to have been born during the seventy years' captivity in Babylon and to have returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel. He was a colleague of Zechariah, Ezr 5:1; 6:14.

DATE WRITTEN: 520 B.C. The remnant that had returned from captivity was selfishly preoccupied with their own affairs, and were more concerned in beautifying their own dwellings than in rebuilding the Lord's house. The work had ceased for years, 1:4.

PURPOSE: To motivate God's people to reorder their priorities, complete the temple and restore proper worship. They could then expect the blessing of God.

TO WHOM WRITTEN: The Remnant, especially those who had returned from Exile in Babylon.

MAIN THEME: Sharp rebukes for the neglect to rebuild the temple coupled with cheering exhortations and promises to those under-taking the work.

KEY WORDS: Build the Temple, 1:7-8.

KEY VERSES: 2:4-9.

- (1) Divine Presence, strengthening, 4.
- (2) Divine Power, moving, 6.
- (3) Divine Glory, filling, 7.
- (4) Divine Peace, coming, 9.

SYNOPSIS:

(1) **A cutting reproof**, showing that God had withheld His natural blessings because His temple was left in ruins, 1:3-11.

(2) **Words of encouragement** as the work of rebuilding the temple was resumed, 1:12-15.

(3) **Inspiring promises** to the older people who had seen Solomon's Temple and were discouraged at the inferiority of the structure they were able to build, 2:3.

They were told of a coming manifestation of divine power and the appearing of the Messiah when the glory of the Lord would fill the house, 2:7-9.

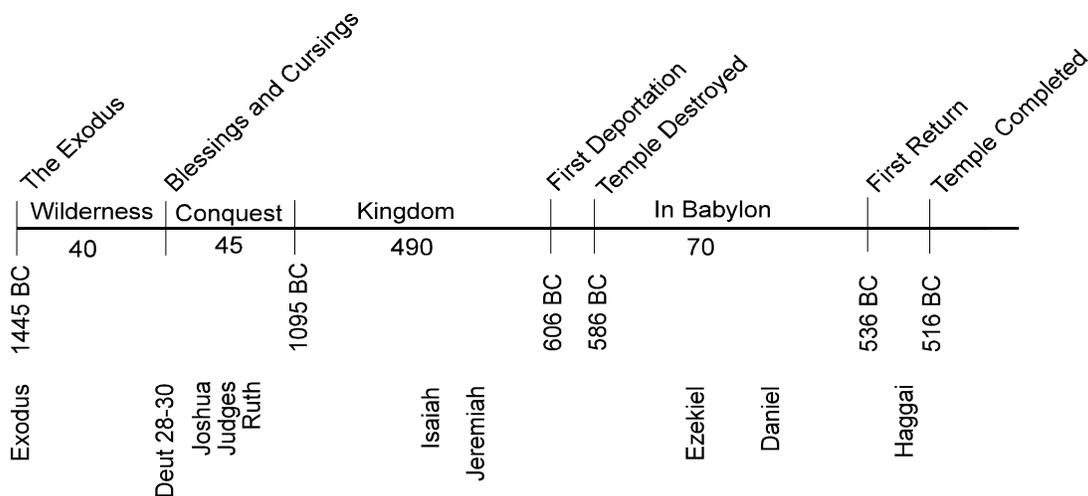
(4) **A reminder of their unworthiness** to erect a house for the Lord of Hosts, 2:10-14.

(5) **Predictions of the doom** of the foreign nations, and words of commendation for Zerubbabel, as God's chosen instrument, 2:20-23.

PROMINENT PEOPLE: Haggai, Zerubbabel, Joshua, the Remnant.

(Taken from Thompson's Bible Book Outlines)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



(Excerpt from "Haggai" by Hampton Keathley)