



The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
Obedience to God is an expression of our love for God

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
To say we follow Jesus Christ  
Without attempting to obey  
Reveals our lack of faith that  
He Will lead us right in every way.

*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*

(1 John 5:3 NKJV)

*From "Our Daily Bread", July 27, 2010)*

Series: Priorities for the People of God

UNIT: Hope and Confidence Come from God

**NEXT WEEK**

**Trust God's Promises**

- Hag 1:12
- Hag 2:1-9)

## Obey The Lord Haggai 1:1-11

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson admonishes us to **Obey the Lord**. The **study's aim** is to see how God leads us and how we are to obey and that there are consequences to our failure to obey. The **study's application** is to order our lives and establish our habits of thought that we would not even consider disobeying the Lord. *(From the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary).*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

The focus of the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah was to challenge God's people to wake up from 16 years of spiritual slumber, years that had left God's house unfinished and the people themselves unfulfilled. Thus their problem was not that of confronting changes that had occurred during that time; rather, their problem was that nothing had changed because they had neglected to make the completion of God's house a priority. Haggai and Zechariah lived in the post-exilic period of Old Testament history. The "exilic" part of this phrase refers to the tragedy of the Babylonian exile. That deportation occurred in stages, culminating in 586 BC when the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem. Palestine had been under Babylonian domination for some two decades preceding that tragedy (example: Daniel 1). In 539 BC, Cyrus of Persia conquered the Babylonians, and Persia became the dominant power in the ancient Near East. Soon afterward, Cyrus issued a decree that allowed Jews who so desired to return home and rebuild their house of worship (2 Chronicles 36:22, 23, same as Ezra 1:1-3). It is worth noting that the prophet Isaiah had predicted the rise of Cyrus (by name) and described what that king would do on behalf of God's people (Isaiah 44:24-45:6). That was about 150 years before Cyrus ever appeared on the stage of world history! So in 538 BC some 50,000 Jews traveled to Judah to begin the task of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 2:64, 65). Within two years of their arrival, they had completed the important step of setting the foundation in place. But then opposition to the rebuilding effort surfaced, and the people's enthusiasm began to wane. This opposition originated with those who already resided in the territory when the Jews arrived back—people who had moved in and taken up residence in the land after God's people were exiled. They did not welcome the return of God's people, so these opponents "set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans... Thus the work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra 4:4, 5, 24). The temple remained unfinished for 16 years. As time passed, it became easier and easier to let the task remain undone. It seemed more practical for the people to focus on rebuilding their own homes and pursue their own interests. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah appeared on the scene in the midst of the people's complacency (Ezra 5:1). These men were raised up by the Lord to shake the people out of their lethargy, to stir them to act in order to finish rebuilding the temple. Although the book of Haggai is placed within the Minor Prophets because of its length (only Obadiah is shorter), Haggai played a major role in conveying God's message to a people who had become indifferent to his work. *(From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

**Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator**

1. It is important not only to start God's work but also to finish it (Hag. 1:1; cf. Ezra 3:8-13)
2. Man's excuses may fool others but never God (Hag. 1:2)
3. Our actions —rather than our words—are the best indicator of our priorities (vss. 3-4)
4. The wise man regularly examines his actions, priorities, and loyalties (vss. 5-6)
5. True repentance requires full obedience (vss. 7-8)
6. God's people should expect God's discipline when they disobey (Hag. 1:9-11; cf. Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:6)

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **OBEDIENCE PROBLEMS TO CONSIDER (HAG 1:2-4)**

#### *Selfish attitudes (1-2)*

- An attitude of self-interest (John 12:4-6)
- An attitude of being unconcerned (Prov 29:7)
- An attitude of covetness (James 4:1-2)
- An attitude of discontentment (Eccl 4:8)
- An attitude of conceit (1 Tim 6:4-5)

#### *Selfish priorities (3-4)*

- A priority of allowing personal things ahead of God (Matt 8:21-22)
- A priority of seeking needs first versus seeking God's kingdom (Matt 6:33)
- A priority of wealth at any expense (1 Tim 6:9-10)
- A priority of hoarding wealth (James 5:1-5)
- A priority of family ahead of God (Matt 10:37-39)

### **DISOBEDIENCE CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER (HAG 1:5-11)**

#### *Unproductive work (5-6)*

- Unproductive because of not listening to God (Lev 26:18-20)
- Unproductive because of past sins (2 Sam 21:1)
- Unproductive because of unfaithfulness to God (Hos 4:10-12)
- Unproductive because of not honoring God (Mal 2:2)

#### *Unproductive possessions (7-9)*

- Unproductive because of not depending on God to guide and empower (Ps 127:1-2)
- Unproductive because of relying on human efforts (Luke 5:5)
- Unproductive because it is God, not man, who makes all things happen (1 Cor 3:6-9)
- Unproductive because of working outside of God's Will (Isa 49:4)

#### *Withheld blessings (10-11)*

- Blessings withheld because of turning away from God (Amos 4:7-8)
- Blessings withheld because of sin against God (1 Kings 8:35)
- Blessings withheld because of not humbling ourselves, repenting and praying to God (2 Chron 7:13-15)
- Blessings withheld because of unrighteousness (Isa 5:5-7)
- Blessings withheld because of stubbornness and rebellion (Jer 5:23-25)
- Blessings withheld because of not worshiping God (Zech 14:17-19)
- Blessings withheld because of corrupt leaders (Zech 10:1-2)