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## **Obey the Lord**

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition  
or Roget's Thesaurus – **June 1, 2014**

### **Haggai 1:1-11**

**Introduction:** In this chapter, after the preamble of the prophecy, we have, **I.** A reproof of the people of the Jews for their dilatoriness (slowness in motion) and slothfulness (laziness) in building the temple, which had provoked God to contend with them by the **judgment** of **famine** and **scarcity**, with an exhortation to them to resume that good work and to prosecute it in good earnest, Habakkuk 1:1-11. **II.** The good success of this sermon, appearing in the people's return and close application to that work, wherein the prophet, in God's name, animated and encouraged them, assuring them that God was with them, Habakkuk 1:12-15. (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc*)

**Haggai 1:1**, In the **second** year of **Darius** the king...

**Thought 1.** This Darius is not the Darius of Daniel's time in the lion's den. He was known as "Darius the Mede"; and also as Cyrus: Daniel 9:1, Ezra 1:1. This is Darius I the Great. (Source: *The Reese Chronological Bible, pages 1158, 1161, & 1178*)

**NOTE:** This was **Darius the Great** of Persia, also called **Darius Hystaspes**, after the name of his father. He reigned over the Medo-Persian Empire from 522-486 B.C. He continued the benevolent policies that had characterized the reign of **Cyrus** who issued the **original order** for the **rebuilding** of the **Temple** and the return of the Jewish captives to Jerusalem. (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

**NOTE:** Cuneiform evidence from Babylon proves that Cyrus died in August 530 BC and that his son Cambyses II had become king. His younger son, Smerdis, died before Cambyses left to invade the eastern front. From Herodotus' account, Cambyses killed his brother to avoid a rebellion in his absence. Cambyses continued his father's policy of expansion, and managed to capture Egypt for the Empire, but soon died after only seven years of rule. An imposter named Gaumata, claiming to be Smerdis, became the sole ruler of Persia for **seven months**, until he was killed by **Darius the Great**. (The one of Haggai 1)

**Darius I the Great** (c. 549 BC– 485 BC; Old Persian: "Upholder of good") was the son of Hystaspes, and **king of Persia** from **522 BC to 485 BC**. (Source: *Wikipedia.com*)

**Haggai 1:1-2** ...in the **second** year of **Darius** the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by **Haggai** the **prophet** unto **Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel, **governor** of Judah, and to **Joshua** the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, **The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.**

**NOTE:** *In the sixth month, in the first day of the month...* This corresponds to Elul, answering to parts of our August and September. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**NOTE:** Haggai was one of the twelve **minor prophets** and the author of the Book of Haggai. His name means "**my feast**". He was the first of three prophets (with **Zechariah**, his contemporary, and **Malachi**, who lived about **one hundred years later**), whose ministry belonged to the period of **Jewish history** which began **AFTER** the **return** from **captivity** in **Babylon**.

Scarcely anything is known of his personal history. He may have been one of the captives' taken to Babylon by **Nebuchadnezzar**. He began his ministry about **sixteen** years after the **return** of the Jews to Judah (ca. 520 BCE). The work of **rebuilding** the temple had been put to a **stop** through the **intrigues** (*schemes*) of the Samaritans. (Source: Wikipedia.com)

**Thought 1.** This first verse tells us that Darius I, the present king of Persian, has been in office for one year and five months; and is in the first day of the sixth month. In Ezra 4:1-24, we find that adversaries had raised opposition to the work on the temple; and because of it, the work had been brought to a halt. It began in 535 B.C., and stopped in 529 B.C.. So, they stopped after about 6 years of work on the temple. (Source: The Reese Chronological Bible, pages 1175, 1179)

**Ezra 4:1-7**, Now when the **adversaries** of Judah and Benjamin **heard** that the children of the captivity **buildd** the **temple** unto the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua (*This is the Joshua of Haggai 1:1.*), and the rest of the **chief** of the fathers of Israel, said... ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto OUR God of Israel, as king **Cyrus** the **king** of **Persia** hath commanded us. Then the people of the land **weakened** the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them to **frustrate** their purpose, **all** the days of **Cyrus**... And in the **reign** of **Ahasuerus** (*Cambyses II, who came into power when his father Cyrus died*), in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an **accusation** against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes (*the other name of Cambyses II*) wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions unto Artaxerxes...

**Ezra 4:11-16**, This is the copy of the **letter**... Thy servants the men of this side of the river... Be it known unto the **king**, that the **Jews** which came up from thee to us... building the rebellious... bad city... have set up the walls... if this city be buildd, and the walls set up again, then will they **not pay toll, tribute, and custom**, and so thou **shalt endamage** the **revenue** (*the money*) of the kings. Now we have maintenance from the king's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's **dishonor**, therefore have we sent and certified the king; That **search** may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find... that this city is a rebellious city, and **hurtful** unto kings... if this city be buildd again... thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.

**Thought 2.** They used the bad past of rebels, against these obedient people of God. So, they were actually slandered! But, it accomplished Satan's goal!

**Ezra 4:17-24**, Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor... to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions... the **letter** which ye sent unto us hath been plainly **read** before me. And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of **old time** hath made **insurrection** against kings... that rebellion... made therein. There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem... and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid... Give ye now commandment to cause these **men** to **cease**, and that this **city** be not buildd, until another commandment shall be given from me.

Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read... they went up in haste to **Jerusalem** unto the Jews, and **made** them to **cease** by **force** and power. Then **ceased** the work of the **house** of **God**, which is at Jerusalem.  
So it **ceased** UNTO the second year of the reign of **Darius king of Persia**.

**1 Timothy 6:10** ...the **LOVE** of **money** is the **root** of **all** (**all manner of**) evil...

**Haggai 1:3-4**, Then **came** the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it **time** for you, O ye, to **dwelt** in your **CEILED** houses, and this **house** lie **waste**?

**Ceiled defined 5603, spec. to roof (pass. part. as noun, a ROOF) or wainscot.**  
Wainscot, a wooden lining of an interior wall usually paneled.

**Thought 1.** Artaxerxes dies in 522 B.C.; and Darius takes over. So, the work had been stopped for 7 years because of a foolish king in power who did not reverence God. Even today, sometimes Christians who are carnal, slander other good Christians. And even some in leadership, who don't carefully check into what is said, come to erroneous conclusions. What's the answer? We have to keep doing good regardless of the circumstances, because we overcome evil only by **DOING** good: Romans 12:21.

When Artaxerxes died, they should have immediately resumed work on the temple. Or at the least, asked that Darius check Cyrus' decree and get his permission to go back to work. They had LET the word of God slip from them. So, they were not even looking for the opportunity to go back to work! That's laziness and disobedience!

**Haggai 1:5-7**, Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; **Consider** your ways. Ye have **sown much**, and bring in **little**; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are **not** filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is **none** warm; and he that earneth **wages** earneth wages to put it into a **bag** with **holes**. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; **Consider** your ways.

**Thought 1.** What we see here is correction by reasoning. If the Lord can get us to think properly as we look at his WORD, he can help us. But not knowing that correction is OF the ways of life, some people resent it, won't accept it, and hurt themselves due to pride.

**Proverbs 6:23**...reproofs (**correction, reasoning**) of instruction ARE the way of **LIFE**...

**Proverbs 16:6**, By **mercy** (**loving-kindness, pity**) and **TRUTH** iniquity is purged: and by the FEAR of the Lord men depart from evil.

**Proverbs 15:32**, He that **refuseth** instruction **despiseth** (**abhor** [HATE]) his own soul: but he that heareth **reproof** (**correction**) getteth understanding.

**Haggai 1:8**, Go up to the mountain, and bring **wood**, and **build** the **house**; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be **glorified**, saith the Lord.

**NOTE:** God always takes pleasure and is glorified when his people **OBEY** his word; and the reconstruction of the ruined Temple was clearly a project included in the will of God. It was God's spirit that stirred up Cyrus to command it; and it was the same which launched the burning words of Haggai against the **indifferent laziness** of the returned exiles. How could that rude pile of stone and timber glorify God? It was God's promise that the ancient covenant with Abraham still existed, despite the chosen people's having broken it and having been repudiated by their God and removed from many of their ancient privileges. It was the visible promise of God Himself that, in time, the **Messiah** would appear. It meant that Judah, unlike the northern Israel, would never disappear until God's purpose relative to their Messiah was accomplished. Such indeed did **glorify** the God of heaven and earth. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**Haggai 1:9-10**, Ye looked for **much**, and, lo it came to **little**; and when ye brought it home,

*I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is **stayed** from **dew**, and the earth is **stayed** from her **fruit**.*

**NOTE: For your sake...** These are most significant words, and they point squarely to the following passage from Genesis: Cursed is the ground FOR THY SAKE! (Genesis 3:17). The teaching of the Bible reveals emphatically that **providential intervention** is continual, and a constant possibility in all of the affairs of men. God often called for drought upon Israel, and sent prophets to announce it in advance; nor are such episodes confined to the Old Testament. **Agabus prophesied** a four-year famine under Claudius Caesar (Acts 11:28). That was in this current dispensation; and the same God who can foretell a great drought can as easily send or withhold it! All such impediments to man's ease and prosperity are intended as guideposts to point him to the Father in heaven. For Adam's sake (Genesis 3:17) ... For your sake ... (Haggai 1:10).

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**Haggai 1:11**, *And I called for a **drought** upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the **labour** of the **hands**.*

**NOTE:** Here is an elaboration of the truth that all productivity of every conceivable kind depends, in the last analysis, upon the **WILL of God**. Such an uncontrollable and unpredictable thing as a shift in the jet stream that roars through the earth's atmosphere at vast altitudes could wipe out a whole civilization. A sudden increase of the earth's temperature in the south polar region could increase the depths of the oceans by more than a hundred feet, wiping out most of the cities of the whole world. The chairman of the Rockefeller Medical Foundation once said that over four thousand **viruses**, capable of bringing death to multiplied millions, are already identified and awaiting only some propitious (favorable) moment to spread death and devastation all over the earth. One such unpredictable outbreak in the **14th century destroyed the majority of mankind!** "Oh, it cannot happen now!" The wisest men on earth know it can happen now and have not failed to warn us. If men would continue to enjoy the blessings of God, may they never neglect to **honor** the **God** of all blessing and to obey his will.

"Men simply have not learned the lesson that God's Temple comes first (the church, in our age). They do not believe that Jesus spoke the truth for our times, when he said, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you' (Matthew 6:33)."

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**Haggai 1:12**, *Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, **obeyed** the **voice** of the Lord their God, and the words of **Haggai** the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him, and the people did **FEAR** (**reverence**) before the Lord.*

**NOTE:** Strangely, the name of the great **High Priest** who accompanied the returnees to Babylon was the same as that of the great leader who brought the children of Israel into Canaan. The name **Joshua** means **Salvation**, and is identical with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus being the Greek form of Joshua. Just as the Joshua who entered Canaan was in some ways **typical** of Jesus Christ, there likewise seems to be some important typical aspects of the life of this **Joshua**. Two visions of him are in the prophecy of Zechariah, that of the attack of Satan against Joshua (Zechariah 3:1-10), and that of the Crown (Zechariah 6:9-15).

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**Proverbs 14:2**, He that walketh in his uprightness **feareth** the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways **despiseth** (**disrespects**) him.