

## HAGGAI—INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDIES FOR YOUTH

By Mama Lorella Rouster, Every Child Ministries

Haggai 1:1-11

1:1

- Who or what is the main actor in this sentence?
- Who are the secondary actors? (Clue: Pretend you are an English teacher asking your students what is the subject and main verb of the sentence.)
- How is the time frame for this action identified?
- Who was Darius? What do you know about him? (He was King of the great Persian empire (based in what is now modern day Iran) from 522 to 586 B.C., according to the Holman Bible Dictionary. He helped the Jews who had been conquered & scattered. He was an absolute ruler of immense power, but his people liked him because he made many improvements in their living which made them feel proud to be Persians.)
- Who was speaking for God?
- To what two people was he speaking?

1:2

- What had God heard the people saying?
- What was reason they had not yet built the temple, the house of God?
- What do you think they might have been waiting for?

1:3-4

- What did God think about their thoughts?
- How aware are you that God knows the thoughts of your heart?
- If He were to evaluate your thoughts today, what do you think He might tell you?

- What question did God ask these people about their thoughts?
- What comparison did He make?
- How would you have answered God's question?
- The Bible never says it is wrong to build ourselves houses, so why did God disapprove of it?
- What Biblical principle had they forgotten or ignored? (Confer Exodus 20:1-3 and Matthew 6:33.)
- Since they had built beautiful homes for themselves but allowed the temple to remain in ruins, what did this say about their sense of priorities? Who or what was really first in their lives.

1:5

- What did God ask the people to do?
- If God asked you to consider your own ways, what specific areas of your life might He be talking about?

1:6-7

- Looking at the structure of this passage, what does it have in common with the passage that went before it? (Clue, if needed: What phrase is repeated?)
- Just as God previously contrasted them building their own homes but leaving the house of worship in ruins, now He makes a series of other contrasts? How many do you count, and what are they?
- How are these contrasts in their lives related to the contrast of their building their own homes but leaving the temple in ruins?
- Which contrast relates to their gardens & fields?
- When we sow a crop, what is the normal expected result?
- How is this expected result built into the very way God created plants?

- These were an agrarian or agricultural people. Could they succeed without good crops? Why not?
- Which two contrasts relate to their nutrition?
- How important is good nutrition? What can be some of the results if it is not adequate?
- Which contrast relates to protecting their bodies from the elements like wind, rain and cold?
- Which contrast relates to their income or ability to make money?
- Picture in your mind a bag with big holes in the bottom. Picture yourself putting in coins faster and faster. What is the problem with the picture?
- After making all these contrasts, God asks them again to consider their ways. What connection does He expect them to make between the poor condition of their lives and their priorities in relation to God?
- To what degree do these contrasts describe you, your family and your community? To the extent that they do describe you, should you also consider your ways? What might God be wanting to tell you?

1:8

- In this one verse, God tells them the solution to their problems. In their case, what specifically did He want them to do?
- What efforts would be required on their part?
- What would the result be?
- How would this affect God's reputation?
- You are in a different situation, but what do you believe God is telling you to do in order to give Him top priority in your life?
- Is there something you should be doing to build or improve your own local meeting place for believers? If so, specifically what?

1:9

- What does God say is the reason for these people's problems?
- Picture in your mind working very hard, but then God blowing away the results of your labor. Why would you never be able to get ahead in such a case?
- Why does God say He is doing this?
- Sometimes God does allow His people to go through trials and hard circumstances in order to strengthen them and cause them to depend more on Him. However, in this case, what specific sin was blocking their success and prosperity?

## 1:10-11

- What specifically had God sent them because of their sin?
- How had this affected them?
- God had not done this because He hated them. What was His intention in doing it?
- If you and others in your church and community were to really put God first in their lives, what changes would you make?
- What results might you expect to see?

## 1:12

- Haggai's message was addressed to the two leaders of the people—the civil authority and the religious authority. What was their response to his message?
- What was the response of the people at large?
- What is your response when God clearly speaks to you?

## 1:13

- What encouraging message was Haggai then able to give them?
- Why do you think it would be especially encouraging to know that the Lord was with them?

## 1:14-15

- Whose hearts did God stir up as a result of Haggai's message?

- What practical thing did they do as a result?
- Compare the time when they began work with the time when God gave Haggai His message (1:1). How much time had elapsed?
- Think about the condition of God's people in the beginning and in the end of chapter one. What has changed, and why was it important?
- What might God be telling you needs to change in your own life?

## 2:1-3

- After the leaders and the people repented and began rebuilding the temple once again, how much time elapsed before God spoke to Haggai again (compare 1:15).
- To whom did God instruct Haggai to direct his message? Are these the same people who received his first message or someone different?
- What comparison did God ask them to make?
- Who would be qualified to make this comparison?
- Would this thought be encouraging or discouraging to them at the natural level?

## 2:4-5

- Yet what encouraging thought does God tell Haggai to give them?
- What assurance does God give them that this is true?
- As a result of that assurance, what should be their response?
- Have there been times in your own experience when the natural situation looked discouraging and your only comfort was in knowing that God was with you? Was it enough? Why?

## 2:6-7

- What does God assure them He will do in the future?
- Think about the term "Desire of All Nations". How does this describe our Lord Jesus Christ?

- They were building a temple that did not look glorious, especially in light of the older temple it replaced, but what did God say He would do to it?
- How would it be better that its glory originated from God rather than from their own skill in building?

2:8

- To whom did the silver and the gold of the temple belong?
- By what name does God describe Himself? Who are the hosts of whom He speaks?

2:9

- How will this temple compare to the latter?
- What will God give in this place?
- This temple was the one in which the Lord Jesus Christ taught. It was the temple in which the veil of the holy of holies was torn from top to bottom at the moment that Jesus died. How does this fact explain certain facts about this passage?

2:10

- When was the message given to Haggai by God?
- How much time had elapsed since the last message (see 2:1)?
- Haggai gave the message, but who voiced it to the people?

2:11-12

- Whom was Haggai directed to ask a question?
- What was the question about?
- Why do you think it was appropriate to ask the priests a questions concerning that?
- What was the question?
- What was their answer?
- God is probably referring to Leviticus 6:27, a law the priests would have known. What is the point of this law?

2:13

- What second question did Haggai ask the priests?
- What was their response?

2:14

- What comparison did God then make?
- What did God see as unclean and why?
- This law probably refers to Numbers 19:22, which the priests would also have known. How is this verse in some ways the opposite of the one referred to previously?
- One Bible commentator says the point of the two questions, taken together, is that sin or pollution is more easily communicated than righteousness. We easily fall into sin, but to keep our hearts right before God is not so easy. How do you find your own experience in this regard?
- Note that God does not call them “my people” but rather “this people”. What do you think may be the significance of this?

2:15-17

- What did God ask them to consider?
- Why does He remind them again of His judgments on them and all their works?
- What was the real point of those judgments? What did God want from them?
- What was the real issue behind the issue of the temple that was not built?

2:18-19

- What did God now promise to do for them?
- Why do you think God is now changing His judgment to blessing?

2:20

- How much time has elapsed since this and God’s last message to Haggai?

2:21-22

- To whom was Haggai to deliver this message?
- What will God do to all the mightiest kingdoms of earth?
- What is God trying to impress upon Zerubbabel?

2:23

- Why will God take Zerubbabel as a signet (a jewel, usually used in the ring born in the right hand of the ruler)?
- What is special about Zerubbabel?
- Think back over the content of this book. For what special task had God chosen Zerubbabel?
- How and why should this encourage the ruler?
- To Zerubbabel God gave the special task of overseeing the rebuilding of the temple that would one day welcome His Son. What special task do you believe God has given to you? If you don't yet know, will you pray and ask Him to show you in His time?

Overall or summary questions:

- What do you see as the overall message of Haggai? Why?
- What have you personally learned from the book of Haggai?
- What would you like to change in your life as a result of this study?

###