

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Haggai

THE BIG YEAR SEASON 3 WEEK 7

1

WHAT YOU NEED

- Clear jar/container
- 7-10 large objects (rubber balls/rocks/shells - these objects need to fit through the opening of the container)
- Bowl of rice/sand
- Spoon

LET'S READ THE BIBLE

Take turns reading the following passages:

- Haggai 1:1-4
- Haggai 1:7-9
- Haggai 1:12-15

2

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The prophet, Haggai, wrote an Old Testament book that was also called Haggai. This book is only 2 chapters long and is made up of four of Haggai's sermons. Haggai is a "minor prophet" because the book he wrote is so short, but this does not mean that the message in this book is not as important as the other prophets' books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel). Haggai's name means "Festival" or "Joyous One." He was a prophet at the same time as the prophet Zechariah.

After the Babylonians had taken God's people to Babylon and held them captive because of their disobedience to God and because they kept worshiping false gods (Idols). A small amount of people, or a remnant, was finally allowed to return to Jerusalem. God had promised when the Israelites went into captivity, that eventually the people would be allowed to return to Jerusalem, and here we find out that that happened. Haggai was with the first group of people that returned to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, led them back to Jerusalem.

When the people returned to Jerusalem, they were a lot more worried about building their own homes and getting all their own things just the way they wanted, than they were worried about fixing and rebuilding the temple. God was displeased about this and spoke to Haggai who spoke to the leaders of God's people and reminded them to get busy and build the temple. Haggai scolded the people for not being busy with God's work. Haggai told them to build the temple and to put God first.

There are five messages in Haggai's four sermons:

1. "Thus says the Lord of Hosts" – God is still God
2. "Build the temple" – Put God first
3. "Consider your ways" – Make sure what you're doing is what God wants you to do
4. "Sin is contagious and pollutes" – Be careful of sin. Don't allow even a little bit of sin in your life because it is very contagious, and it spoils everything.
5. "There is a better day ahead" – God will send the promised Messiah to come and save everyone.

There are many amazing things to learn from this little book.

3

4

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- What was the "remnant"?
- With which group of people did Haggai go back to Jerusalem?
- What did Haggai say the people were more focused on?
- What were they supposed to focus on first?

5

LET'S GO A BIT DEEPER

- If you were an Israelite, how do you think you would have felt if Haggai said to you that you were neglecting God's house and only focused on your own house? Why is it so hard to admit when we have done something wrong? Why is it so easy to be selfish?
- The Israelites were not rebuilding God's temple because they were so focused on their own needs. Have you ever neglected God's work so you could take care of your own needs or do something for yourself instead?
- Why does God want us to focus on Him first? What keeps us from doing this?
- What is one way you can commit to focusing on God and putting Him first this week?

6

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

Pray together:

- Thank God that He never gave up on His people, the Israelites, and that He never gives up on us.
- Ask God to help you as a family to focus on Him and put Him first in your lives.
- Ask God to help you recognise when other things become more important in your life than Him.

7

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN

- Gather all your supplies. You need enough rice/sand to fill your container about 1/2 full - the idea is that if you put the rice/sand in the jar first, the objects below won't fit, but if you put your objects in first and then the rice, it all fits.
- Ask your family to list 7-10 things God wants us to do (Pray, read Bible, go to church, etc.).
- Next ask your family to list 7-10 ways we enjoy spending our time - start scooping rice/sand into the jar 1 tablespoon at a time until all the rice/sand is used. With each scoop, name a way we enjoy spending our time.
- Now, start adding the bigger objects one at a time. With each object, name something God wants us to do. Notice that not all of the objects fit. When we put our wants in front of what God wants us to do, God gets left out of our life.
- Now, pour everything out and separate it.
- This time let's start with what God wants us to do. Start placing the balls in one at a time. With each ball, name something God wants us to do. Notice they all fit this time.
- Now add the rice/sand in one scoop at a time until all is in the jar. Each time naming a way we want to spend our time. Notice this time everything fits.
- When we put God first, it all fits!