

The Story of Haggai

A Read-Aloud Version for Families, with Three Questions to Talk About

Read this out loud at the dinner table, at bedtime, or with your grandchildren. It takes about three minutes.

1 A Broken House

Long ago, God's people had a special building in the city of Jerusalem called the temple. It was the place where they came to worship God. Then an enemy army came, burned the temple down, and took the people far away to a land called Babylon. They lived there for many, many years.

Temple: The special building in Jerusalem where God's people came to worship Him.

2 Coming Home

At last a new king said, "You may go home." Thousands of people walked the long road back to Jerusalem. They were so glad! They said, "Let's build God's house again." They laid the big stones for the floor, and everyone cheered.

3 "Not Yet"

Then things got hard. Some neighbors did not want the temple built. The people got tired and busy. They said, "We will do it later." They built nice houses for themselves. But God's house sat there with only a floor, for sixteen years. That is longer than most children have been alive!

4 A Man With a Message

So God sent a man named Haggai. He told the people what God said: "Think about what you are doing. You have time for your own houses, but not for Mine. Go and build!"

Prophet: A person God sent to tell His people what He wanted them to know.

5 The People Listen

And do you know what? The people listened. Only three weeks later, they picked up their tools and went to work. Some of them were sad, because the new temple did not look as grand as the old one. God told them, "Be strong and work, for I am with you." A few years later, the temple was finished, and the people celebrated with great joy.

Put God first, and do not wait. He is with you.

That is the big idea of the book of Haggai.

Three Questions to Talk About

There are no wrong answers. Let everyone at the table have a turn, grown-ups too.

1 The people said, “Not yet.”

They kept putting off what God asked them to do. Is there something good you know you should do that you keep putting off?

For little ones: What is something Mom or Dad asks you to do that you like to do later?

2 Haggai said, “Think about it.”

God asked the people to stop and think about how they were living. What takes up most of our family's time? Where does God fit in?

For little ones: What is your favorite thing to do with our family?

3 God said, “I am with you.”

The work was big and the people felt small, but God promised to be with them. What is something hard that would be easier if you remembered God is with you?

For little ones: When do you feel scared? God is with you then, too.

Try This Together

Pick one thing your family has been meaning to do for God or for someone else: a visit, a note, a meal, a prayer time. Put it on the calendar this week. Do not wait.

A Prayer to Pray

Dear God, thank You that You are always with us. Help us to put You first and not to wait when You ask us to do something. Make us strong for the work You give us. In Jesus' name, amen.

“Be strong... and work; for I am with you.” Haggai 2:4

Want the whole story? The book of Haggai is only two chapters long. You can read it out loud together in about ten minutes.