



Week 1: Introduction and How to Study



A 7 Lesson Bible Study

Standing in the Ruins-

Haggai

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Standing in the Ruins

A Study of the book
of Haggai



Cindy Collier

All references for the content are listed in the **References and Resources** page at the end of each chapter.

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Standing in the Ruins –
a Study of the book of Haggai

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Introduction

STANDING IN THE RUINS

Ruin. To reduce to a state of decay; to collapse; to disintegrate; to totally destroy to an unrecognizable state.

Shattered at the expectations that did not become a reality, the plans that I had for my life were never realized. As a good Christian girl, growing up in church and being saved at a young age, I had hopes of a life lived in service to Him. A life where the values that I hold dear would be lived out in my home and passed down to the next generation. A life that I thought I walked into because it was God's will. But soon after getting married, I realized that my expectations would not be realized, and the things I thought I deserved would never come to fruition.

Does this sound familiar?

Expectations never realized – hope for the future snatched from your hands, and all power and control over your life seemingly in the hands of the enemy, with you being left standing alone in the ruins.

Sickness, death, divorce, infertility, addiction, mental illness, physical and emotional abuse, financial issues, trauma, natural disasters, violent acts, and even job and social issues. These things have the potential to cause destruction, and the enemy would like nothing more than to use them to bring our lives to a state of ruin.

Much like my own life, the Israelites in the book of Haggai had their homes, their temple, and their lives left in ruin.

They had gone back home to Jerusalem with a purpose. They were going to recoup what the enemy had destroyed seventy years before.

John 10:10 says that the enemy has a three-fold plan for the battles you face. He wants to:

- **Kill** and change you into someone he can use to further his plan.
- **Steal** your strength for the calling of God on your life.
- **Destroy** you completely so that God's plan for you will be defeated.

Because of his hatred for God, Satan's ultimate motive is to defeat Him, His creation, and His plan, and he will do this any way he can. He took advantage of the circumstances of the garden, allowing deception to occur and evil to enter a perfect world.

Satan may try to take advantage of your circumstances to kill and change you, steal your strength, and destroy you completely, but God can use the wilderness experiences to mold you into a mighty warrior.

Satan's biggest fear? To see you on your knees in prayer because you have now enlisted the warriors of heaven in your battle. And when you overcome your trial, your experiences can strengthen you for the ministry God has prepared for you.

While studying the scripture in this study, run every word and every lesson through the sieve of your life's story. Glean from it what applies and allow God to speak truth and bring restoration.

Let God use the lessons to refine your story for His use.

But first.

First, we have to study the Scripture accurately and methodically. The following two chapters will help set the context for the book of Haggai. It is integral to extracting the message that God breathed into Scripture.



In the following chapters, we will explore the four calls to action given to the children of Israel, starting with a call to return from their selfish ways to the work of restoration.

There will be a methodical, verse-by-verse study of the Scripture and a time of reflection so that you can apply God's word to your life's story.

To help make the lessons more applicable to your own life, I will share parts of my testimony and reveal the tactics the enemy used against me.

The faithfulness God bestowed upon me will testify to his sovereign watch and ability to restore.





In the following two chapters, let's set the foundation for the lessons God wants to teach us through the book of Haggai.

GET READY TO STUDY

All references for the content are listed in the **References and Resources** page at the end of each chapter.

Located at the end of each chapter beginning with **Chapter 2 – Chapter 9** are two important pages.

Print these to use as you study.

Included are:

1. Study Questions

This will assist you in taking notes from the Lesson by answering pertinent questions from the content.

2. Reflective Questions

These questions will be addressed throughout the Lesson and will help provide a way for you to think about your own story or testimony based on the messages from Haggai.





How to Study

GETTING THE MOST FROM GOD'S WORD

We can not apply Scripture to our lives unless we understand its true meaning based on context.

Hermeneutics? Exegesis?

The words may be unfamiliar to most of us as laypeople, but they should become a vital part of a believer's Bible study regimen.

When you understand the concept, you will see what I mean.

Hermeneutics is the science of Biblical interpretation. It is a way of interpreting Scripture so that we can more accurately understand it.

There are various methods within this broad topic, and Exegesis is one of them. Exegesis helps us determine the original meaning of a passage of Scripture, or what the author intended to convey within the original context and culture.

Think about it this way. Look at this very familiar verse:

Philippians 4:13

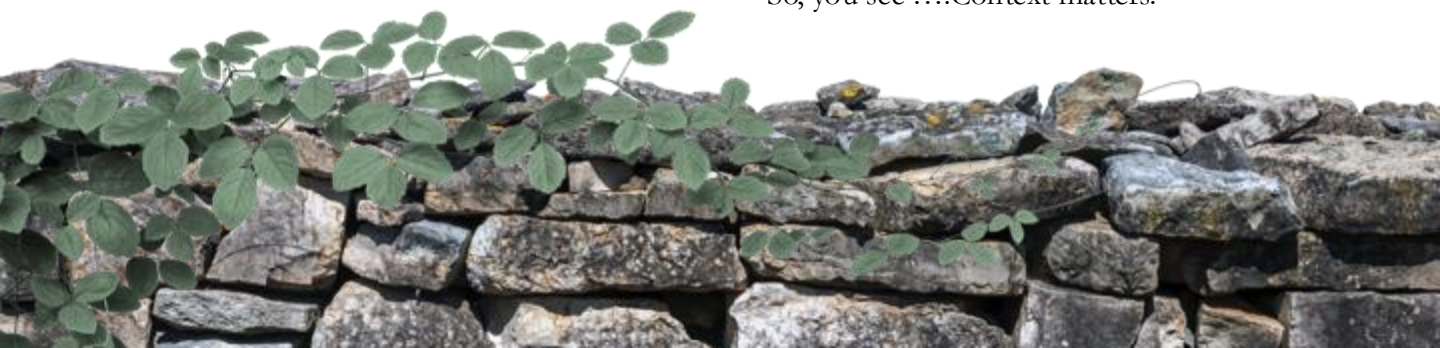
“I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me.”

What if you are claiming this verse while you are trying to:

- lift a heavy box
- make a million dollars by Tuesday
- audition for new singing career
- or lose 50 pounds in a week?

The verse says ALL things – but in looking at the context of the verse, through specific interpretation methods, you will see that Paul was reminding the readers about the things he had been through. He said that with Jesus, he was able to endure ALL of the things that he suffered.

So, you see ...Context matters.



Exegesis

Exegesis is the careful, methodical approach to studying scripture by drawing out the original meaning. One specific method used to do this is a step-by-step approach called the *Historical-Grammatical method* of interpretation.

In using this method, the reader will set the context for the passage. The reader will investigate the history, culture and language that impacts the passage and instead of having a peep-hole view of the passage, it will open the door to show the meaning of the passage in its entirety. In this way the reader will understand the author's reason for the scripture in order to better apply it to everyday life.

An easy way to do this is to have a set of investigative questions that are to be answered about the scripture. To keep the information organized, these questions can be placed in categories. The method of answering each question by using other scripture passages, commentaries, historical references, and study tools will provide the entire context for the passage and give more insight into the original meaning.

But remember two things:

- Always interpret scripture with scripture because **God's word is infallible**. Don't totally rely on the commentary or opinion of man to interpret scripture.
- Lean not on your own understanding but on the **Holy Spirit for guidance and wisdom**.

One example of a structured method of interpretation

Author

Who wrote the book and what is the author's story?

Audience

Who is the book written for and what is their story?

History

What was the time period and what was the religious and political scene at the time?

Culture

What was everyday life like - how were people living and what did they understand as "life"?

Language

What was the original language of the book and what does it mean in the original translation?



Historical-Grammatical Method

The *Historical-Grammatical interpretation* method investigates the context of the scriptural passage by researching all of the information available about the passage. The goal is to find the meaning of the original text.

For example:

Was the author a battle-worn king David who was running for his life and hiding in caves for protection? Is the book a letter by Paul to the churches he was supporting or is it an Apocalyptic book that speaks to the time of Jesus's return?

Was it written during a time of war or peace? Did the author witness the miraculous works of Jesus and His death on the cross or was it an Old Testament prophesy about the Messiah as a future event to come? Was it originally written and translated from Greek or Hebrew?

To know the context is to understand the passage more clearly.

In order to study and learn from the book of Haggai we will answer these questions and will also reference the book of Ezra, which gives additional details to the story.

So, let's begin!

Contextual questions we will answer:

Author

1. Who wrote the book?
2. What was the author's position?
3. What is the author's story?

Audience

1. Who was the audience?
2. What was their story?
3. Why was the book written?

History

1. What was the time period?
2. What was the political scene?
3. What was the religious scene?

Culture

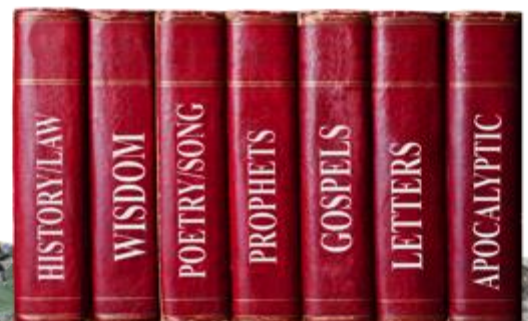
1. What was the culture like?
2. What was the setting like?
3. What was the socio-economic scene?

Language

1. What was the original language?
2. What was the book's genre?
3. What version of the Bible are you using?

There are so many different interpretations as to the genres or categories of the Bible books.

One of the examples of divisions as to genres of the Bible books is pictured below:



THREE CENTRAL QUESTIONS

There are typically three central questions to ask yourself as you study God's word. These will keep the focus on Him.


What does this text say about who God is?

What does this text say about who I am in relation to God?

What should I do in my relationship with God because of who He is and who I am?

Keeping these questions in mind as you read God's word will guide you in keeping it central to Him and not to your own personal experience.





Study Questions

As you work through each of the Chapter's Study Questions – you should first answer this question. This will guide the remaining questions.

Who was God in the text?

What does it teach us about God, his character, who He is, and what he does?

Study Questions Chapter 2

Haggai: Standing in the Ruins

How To Study

We can not apply Scripture to our lives unless we understand its meaning.
Understanding comes from the correct interpretation.

1. In your own words define the following:

a. Hermeneutics:

b. Exegesis

d. Historical – Grammatical method

2. Why is Context important?

3. What are the 3 Questions to remember when reading scripture?

4. Name five Questions categories that should be answered to determine context in the Historical-Grammatical method?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

5. Give 7 different genres for the books of the Bible.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

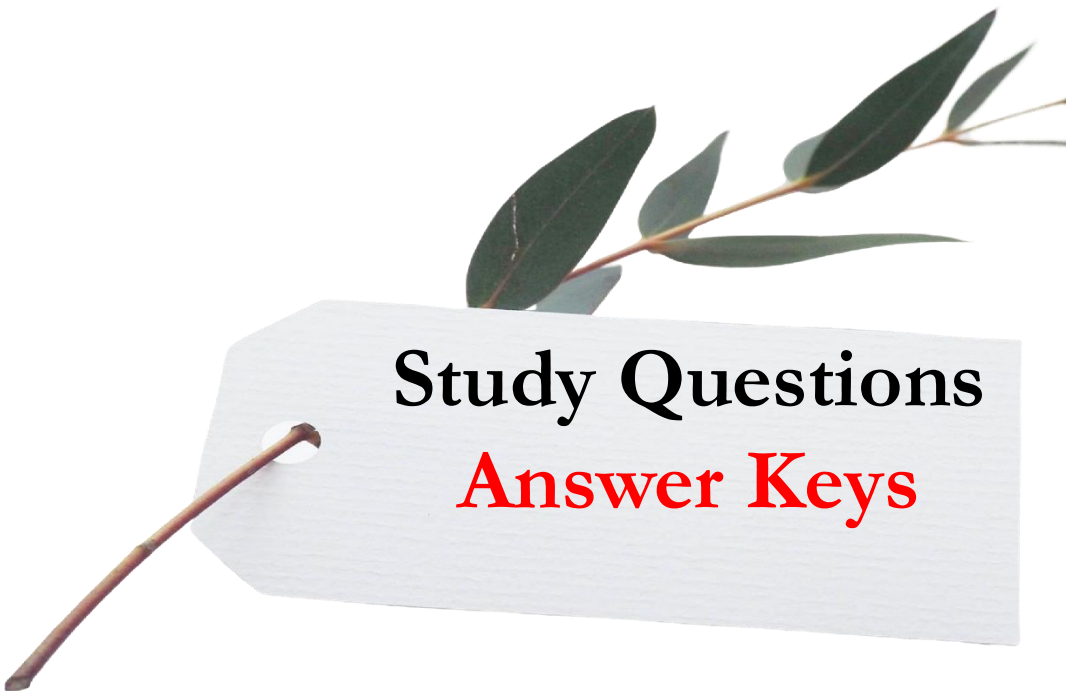
D. _____

E. _____

F. _____

G. _____

6. What section of the Bible or genre would the book of Haggai be in?



Study Questions
Answer Keys

Study Questions Chapter 2

Haggai: Standing in the Ruins

How To Study

ANSWER KEY

We can not apply Scripture to our lives unless we understand its meaning, and understanding comes from the correct interpretation.

1. In your own words define the following:

a. Hermeneutics:

The Science of Biblical Interpretation.

b. Exegesis

The process of interpreting the original

meaning of a text.

c. Historical – Grammatical method

To investigate the context of the original

text by researching information regarding

the language and culture.

4. Why is Context important?

There is but one meaning, and in

determining the context you are better able

to determine the true meaning

5. What are the 3 Questions to remember when reading scripture?

a. What does the text say about God?

b. What does the text say about who I am?

c. What should I do next?

6. Name five Questions categories that should be answered to determine context in the Historical-Grammatical method?

A. Author

B. Audience

C. History

D. Culture

E. Language

7. Give 7 different genres for the books of the Bible.

A. History/Law

B. Wisdom

C. Poetry/Song

D. Prophets

E. Gospels

F. Letters

G. Apocalyptic

8. What section of the Bible or genre would the book of Haggai be in?

Prophets

Resources & References

for all content

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