

Study Aids
Discussion Questions
For “What’s the Message?” Lessons

Lesson 80

Questions:

Do you see a parallel between the Israelites in exile in Babylon and earlier, in Egypt? Remember when the Children of Israel cried to Moses that they would have been better off staying by the fleshpots in Egypt than coming out into the desert to die? Can you imagine a faithful Israelite choosing to stay in the calm comfort of the kingdom of Persia, rather than make the challenging trip back to Jerusalem? How would you have responded to the pronouncement of Cyrus?

What would your priorities have been? First build some kind of a house for your family and a garden to provide some food, or rebuild the city and the temple?

What would be a “reasonable” wait before starting on the temple? Does starting the foundation of the temple in the second year of their return look like a good sign? What about waiting 17 more years while they overcame their opposition and got serious about the construction? Was Haggai right about them putting God at the back of the line while they concentrated on their own comforts? What had happened to their attitude regarding the First Commandment?

Before you get too critical of the Israelites, when was the last time you volunteered for a project at your church? Do you see requests for your help as an infringement on your time, or do you see it as an opportunity to show your love of God? Do you search out such opportunities, or do you lay back and wait to be “invited.”