

Major Lessons From Minor Prophets

Lesson 10 – First Things First! (Haggai)

Haggai 2:8 (NKJV) *‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts.*

Key Thought: Haggai’s message is simple: What are our priorities, and why is it so important to get them right?

Haggai means = "My Feast" or "Festal One" He speaks as one who may have seen the first house in its glory Hag 2:3, and so may have been among the very aged men, who were the links between the first and the last, and who laid the foundation of the house in tears Ezr 3:12.

Haggai was the first prophet after the Babylonian exile in 520 B.C. Septuagint makes Haggai and Zechariah to be the penmen of Psa 138:1-8 and Psa 146:1-10,147, and Psa 148:1-14.

Ezra 3:6 *From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord. But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.*

Ezra 4:4 *Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building,*

Opposition to the rebuilding of the temple resulted in the postponement of construction for nearly two years. During this period, apathy toward temple reconstruction set in among the residents of Judah and Jerusalem. Then in 520 B.C., as a result of changes in the Persian government and the preaching of Haggai, the people resumed rebuilding the temple. Haggai first sounded the call to resume construction in 520 B.C., and Zechariah soon joined him. Zechariah's ministry lasted longer than Haggai's. The returnees finished the project about five years later in 515 B.C. (cf. Ezra 1—6). One way to calculate the 70-year captivity is: from the first deportation to Babylon in 605 B.C. to the year temple reconstruction began, 536 B.C. Another way is: to count from the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C to the completion of temple restoration in 515 B.C.

Washington Monument - Construction of the monument began in 1848, but was halted from 1854 to 1877, and finally completed in 1884. The hiatus in construction happened because of a lack of funds, and the intervention of the American Civil War.

Ezra 4:24 *Thus the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

Haggai 1:1–2 (NKJV) *In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, ² “Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: ‘This people says, “The time has not come, the time that the Lord’s house should be built.” ’ ”*

***Zechariah 1:1 (NKJV)** *In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,*

“For over a year the temple was neglected and well-nigh forsaken. The people dwelt in their homes and strove to attain temporal prosperity, but their situation was deplorable. Work as they might they did not prosper. The very elements of nature seemed to conspire against them. Because they had let the temple lie waste, the Lord sent upon their substance a wasting drought. God had bestowed upon them the fruits of field and garden, the corn and the wine and the oil, as a token of His favor; but because they had used these bountiful gifts so selfishly, the blessings were removed.”—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 573.

Our House Gods House

Haggai 1:4 *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?*

***1 Chronicles 17:1** *Now it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains.*

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Planting Much, Harvesting Little

Leviticus 26:16 (NKJV) *I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.*

Deuteronomy 28:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ *“Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.”* ⁵ *“Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*

“But even this dark hour was not without hope for those whose trust was in God. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah were raised up to meet the crisis. In stirring testimonies these appointed messengers revealed to the people the cause of their troubles. The lack of temporal prosperity was the result of a neglect to put God’s interests first, the prophets declared. Had the Israelites honored God, had they shown Him due respect and courtesy, by making the building of His house their first work, they would have invited His presence and blessing.”—E. G. W. *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 573, 574.

Building up God’s House

Mat 24:1, 2 *And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

* **John 2:19-21** *Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.*

***Matthew 26:61** (NKJV) *and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’ ”*

Mark 14:57–59 (NKJV) *Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.’ ” ⁵⁹ But not even then did their testimony agree.*

Ephesians 2:19–22 (NKJV) *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

1 Peter 2:4–5 (NKJV) *Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

Do Not Fear!

Ezra 5:1–2 (NKJV) *Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. ² So*

Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them.

God’s Greatest Promise

Gen 28:15-18 *Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.*

Judges 6:12–13 (NKJV) *And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, “The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!” Gideon said to Him, “O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us?”*

***Isaiah 41:10** (NKJV) ¹⁰ *Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’*

Matt 1:23 *“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”*

Mat 28:20 *...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

Revelation 21:3 (NKJV) *And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

The Desire of All Nations

Ezra 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² *But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers’ houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy,*

Haggai 2:3 (NKJV) *‘Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing?’*

Haggai 2:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ *“For thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; ⁷ and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,’ says the Lord of hosts.*

Haggai 2:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *‘The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,’ says the Lord of hosts. ‘And in this place I will give peace,’ says the Lord of hosts.”*

Luke 2:46–47 (NKJV) Now so it was that after three days *they found Him in the temple*, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.

Matthew 21:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ And He said to them, “*It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’*” Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant

“The second temple was not honored with the cloud of Jehovah’s glory, but with the living presence of One in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead Bodily—who was God Himself manifest in the flesh. The ‘Desire of all nations’ had indeed come to His temple when the Man of Nazareth taught and healed in the sacred courts. In the presence of Christ, and in this only, did the second temple exceed the first in glory.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 24.

The Lord’s Signet Ring

God reverses to Zerubbabel the sentence on Jeconiah for his impiety. To Jeconiah He had said **Jer 22:24**, “though he were the signet upon My right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life.” The signet was very precious to its owner, never parted with, or only to those to whom authority was delegated (as by Pharaoh to Joseph **Gen 41:42**, or by Ahasuerus to Haman **Est 3:10** and then to Mordecai **Est 8:2**.); through it his will was expressed. Hence, the spouse in the Canticles says, Son 8:6. “Set me, as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm.” The signet also was an ornament to him who wore it. “God is glorified in His saints;” 2Th 1:10.