

Majoring in the Minors Part 10 – Haggai

Joseph Carty / General

Majoring in the Minors / Money; Commitment; Trust; Faith and Order /
Haggai 1:7–8

After Judah has returned from the Babylonian exile, they start to rebuild the temple. After discouragement and distraction set in, sixteen years pass and the project is at a stand still. Haggai give some strong encouragement to reorganize priorities and finish God's temple.

- The book of Haggai
- impassioned plea
- giving to build temple.

After Abraham Lincoln became president, before the days of civil service, office seekers besieged him everywhere trying to get appointments to various jobs throughout the country. Once, confined to bed with typhoid fever, exasperated, Lincoln declared to his secretary, "Bring on the office seekers; I now have something I can give to everybody."

Unknown.

Background

Name

- Means Festive
 - or festival
 - of the Lord.
-
- His name is mentioned
 - many times
 - in the book.
-
- Also mentioned in Ezra

Date

- Contemporary of
- Ezra/Nehemiah

- Zechariah.

Ezra 4–6

- 538 BC
 - Cyrus sends Jews Back
 - Lead By Zerubbabel
 - Begin working
 - Fix Jerusalem
 - Fix Walls
- 536 BC
 - Start to Build Temple
- Samaritans offer to help.
 - Rejected.

- Offended
- Send letters
- calls them trouble-makers

Ezra 4:14–15 (ESV)

Now because we eat the salt of the palace and it is not fitting for us to witness the king's dishonor, therefore we send and inform the king, in order that search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers.

--

You will find in the book of the records and learn that this city is a rebellious city, hurtful to kings and provinces, and that sedition was stirred up in it from of old. That was why this city was laid waste.

- Now Artaxerxes
- sides with Samaritans

Ezra 4:21 ESV

Therefore make a decree that these men be made to cease, and that this city be not rebuilt, until a decree is made by me.

- 534 BC
 - Made to stop work.

- 14 years pass
 - discouragement
 - distraction
 - focused on
 - personal issue
 - personal projects

- 520 BC
 - Haggai and Zechariah
 - prophesy

Ezra 5:1 (ESV)

Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.

- Prophets tell people...
 - start the project again.

- New King

- New Regional Leader.

- Regional leader asked them
 - why are you building
 - who gave you permission?

- Send letter to Darius
 - to see what
 - he would allow.

- The Jew say,
 - Cyrus asked us to

- build this...

Ezra 5:17 ESV

Therefore, if it seems good to the king, let search be made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by Cyrus the king for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. And let the king send us his pleasure in this matter.”

- They are more
 - diplomatic this time.
- They know
 - right words
 - to get permission.
- King grants permission:

Ezra 6:7 (ESV)

Let the work on this house of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

- And pays for all of it!!!

Ezra 6:14 (ESV)

And the elders of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. They finished their building by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia;

- So...
- I told you then end
- of the story.
- It all ends well
- everyone is happy
- and the Lord
 - blessed His people.
- But we have to rewind.

- Highlight
- the part where
- Haggai prophesies.
- Sermon about money

I heard about a farmer who called the office of the minister asking to see "The Head Hog at the trough." The receptionist said, "Sir, if you're talking about our beloved Minister, you may call him Reverend or Pastor, but I don't think it would be proper to refer to him as the "head Hog at the trough.'" "Well, all right," the farmer said. "I just sold a few sows and was going to donate ten thousand dollars to the building fund, so I was hopping to catch him." "Oh, just a minute, sir." The receptionist said, "I think I heard the little porker just come in!"

A Book for Us

- Obviously,
- This is timely message
- We are in middle
- of building project.

- fundraising.

- This entire book

- impassioned appeal

- God's people to
 - use funds

 - build temple.

- Firstly,

- I just want to say.

- Thank you
 - for those who are

 - already giving

 - sacrificially

 - to this cause.

- We are well on our way

- to making this dream
- a reality.
- Through your sacrifices
- God blessings,
- we will have
 - a new church.
- But let's be honest,
- in most cases
- we can always
 - sacrifice more
 - and prioritize better.
- This book is written
- to people who have
- need for more

- sacrifice
 - reorganization of priorities
 - recommitment
 - more faith
 - zeal for God's work.
- I don't know what
 - position you fit into.
 - Passion for this project.
 - Complete faith in project.
 - Zeal for moving forward.
 - Early adopter
 - On the bandwagon...
- Or may you are
 - more reserved

- unsure
 - waiting to see
 - hope it doesn't
 - struggling for faith
 - needing to change priorities
-
- Or maybe
 - you are halfway between.
-
- Wherever you are,
 - we all have room
 - for growth
 - in faith
 - trust
 - passion
 - for God's work.

- Let's try to
- take Haggai's words
- that may possibly
 - be for to us
 - apply to our own life.

Words of Haggai

Haggai 1:2-4 ESV

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the LORD." Then the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?

- He is speaking to
 - people who go distracted.
- Started to build
 - forced to stop

- 16 years pass
- Maybe saying to self...
 - "God closed door."
 - "Wait until He opens."
- Apparently,
 - God was unhappy
- He wanted them
 - move forward in faith.
- > Maybe some
 - > look at our project...
- > saying:
 - > too much
 - > too hard

- > too bid
 - > not good time
 - > “God hasn’t opened door...”
- > May I encourage you
 - > move forward,
 - > until you are certain
 - > God is closing door.
- Here god is rebuking them.
- They stopped building
 - God’s house...
- But,
 - they kept building their’s.
- They have nice houses

- God's house is rubble.

- › May I be honest?

- › I've been to many

- › of your houses.

- › Nobody has

- › kitchen as

- › out-of-date

- › bad

- › unkept

- › as our church kitchen!

- › Needed remodel

- › 25 years ago!

(Secretly happy for flood

maybe do little remodel)

Listen

I'm simple man

You see car I drive.

House I have

Yard I have

Not impressive.

House I grew up in,

few houses

more disrepair

than our church!

I'm simple man

but I'm embarrassed

of our church!

- Now well kept,
- maintenance problems...

> If this was your home

> remodeled

> or moved

> years ago....

- Why should we
- expect less of
- God's house!!!

- Biggest reason
- not to make me
- feel better
- for God's name

- impression we give
- to our community.
- Thankfully,
- we are planning
- building project!

Leighton Farrell was the minister of Highland Park Church in Dallas for many years. He tells of a man in the church who once made a covenant with a former pastor to tithe ten percent of their income every year. They were both young and neither of them had much money. But things changed. The layman tithed one thousand dollars the year he earned ten thousand, ten thousand dollars the year he earned one-hundred thousand, and one-hundred thousand dollars the year he earned one million. But the year he earned six million dollars he just could not bring himself to write out that check for six-hundred thousand dollars to the Church. He telephoned the minister, long since having moved to another church, and asked to see him. Walking into the pastor's office the man begged to be let out of the covenant, saying, "This tithing business has to stop. It was fine when my tithe was one thousand dollars, but I just cannot afford six-hundred thousand dollars. You've got to do something, Reverend!" The pastor knelt on the floor and prayed silently for a long time. Eventually the man said, "What are you doing? Are you praying that God will let me out of the covenant to tithe?" "No," said the minister. "I am praying for God to reduce your income back to the level where one thousand dollars will be your tithe!"

- Haggai

- goes on to say:

Haggai 1:5–6 ESV

Now, therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways. You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

- They are working hard
- but not getting ahead.
- They say,
 - this is a rat-race.
- › American suburban life.
 - › work all day
 - › no time for
 - › things that matter most!!!
 - › rest

- > companionship
 - > spiritual health
 - > parenting
 - > witnessing
 - > serving God.
-
- > Do you feel like that???
 - > Maybe there are reasons...

The American industrialist, Henry Ford, was once asked to donate money for the construction of a new medical facility. The billionaire pledged to donate \$5,000. The next day in the newspaper, the headline read, "Henry Ford contributes \$50,000 to the local hospital." The irate Ford was on the phone immediately to complain to the fund-raiser that he had been misunderstood. The fund-raiser replied that they would print a retraction in the paper the following day to read, "Henry Ford reduces his donation by \$45,000." Realizing the poor publicity that would result, the industrialist agreed to the \$50,000 contribution in return for the following: That above the entrance to the hospital was to be carved the biblical inscription: "I came among you and you took me in."

Bits & Pieces, March 3, 1994, pp. 1-2.

- Listen...

Haggai 1:9 ESV

You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the LORD of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.

- Let me be balanced...

- I'm not say,
 - every hardship
 - anyone is going through
 - is because they
 - didn't pledge enough
 - to building project.

- Life is not
 - that simple.

- One reason for

- all problems...
- But the Bible is clear.
- Sometimes...
- God withhold blessings
 - to help us see
 - need to reorganize
 - life priorities!!
- › Let's be honest,
 - › who has perfect priorities
 - › never makes bad
 - › judgments about
 - › self vs. God/others.
- › There is always room for
 - › improvement

- › surrender
- › sacrifice
- › Take God's word
- › for what it is
- › saying to you today...
- › What priorities
- › can you rectify
- › with your money?

If you give what you do not need, it isn't giving. – Mother Teresa.

The People Obey

- Next:

Haggai 1:12 ESV

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.

- Praise God.
 - they listened.
 - obeyed.
 - changed priorities.
 - put God first.
 - put God's work first.
 - put God's house first.
-
- It only took
 - 3 weeks for message
 - to sink in!
-
- They got to work.
 - God's money

- bought supplies
- started working!!!

Encouragement

- There were hardships
- sacrificing for God's work
- not easy...
- But God said to them...

Haggai 2:4 ESV

Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts,

- God is pushing them forward
- encouraging them
- strengthening them

- same trials as before.
- Keep moving forward.
- In our current
 - building project
 - there will be trials.
- First trail is
 - fundraising...
 - Lots of money!
- This is a
 - trial of faith.
- Matter of trust.

Luke 1:37 ESV

For nothing will be impossible with God.”

- God is asking us
 - step out in faith.

- Our combined income
 - easily provide for
 - this work.

- Some of you
 - sacrificed a lot
 - for your pledge...

- I just want
 - to say
 - Thank you.

- Your reward is in heaven!!!
- You will not regret this.
- For some,
- God is waiting
- for you to
 - respond in faith.
- God is moving forward.
- already raised
- \$250K
- Will you move forward
- with God?

God Will Provide

- Let us not
 - be afraid of big numbers
 - God own's it all.
-
- He said:

Haggai 2:7–8 ESV

And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts.

- God says:
 - I own all the money.
 - I'll get it from others.
-
- But first,
 - God wanted

- his people to
 - step out in faith!

- Later God
 - convinced King Darius
 - richest man in world!
 - Leader of world!
 - Provide rest of money!

- Don't limit God!
 - Don't count income
 - We have money
 - we lack faith!!!

- › In our building project
 - › move forward in faith

- › trust God
 - › He will provide.
- But first ask us
- take action of faith
- reorganize our priorities
 - put our money
 - in God's cause
 - it provide the rest.

J.L. Kraft, head of the Kraft Cheese Corporation, who had given approximately 25% of his enormous income to Christian causes for many years, said, "The only investment I ever made which has paid consistently increasing dividends is the money I have given to the Lord."

Step Out In Faith

Haggai 2:18–19 ESV

Consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was

laid, consider: Is the seed yet in the barn? Indeed, the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have yielded nothing. But from this day on I will bless you.”

- God said...
- In the past
 - you had nothing...
 - I withheld blessings
 - because selfish choices
- From now on
 - put God first
 - I will bless
 - take care of you!
- › Brothers and Sisters
- › Is there a passage
- › that applies more

- > to our congregation
- > at this point in time
- > than this!!!

- We must move foreward
- sacrifice for fundraising
- God will bless.

- Don't ask
- how will I afford....
- God will provide.

The very first person to reach the status of billionaire was a man who knew how to set goals and follow through. At the age of 23, he had become a millionaire, by the age of 50 a billionaire. Every decision, attitude, and relationship was tailored to create his personal power and wealth. But three years later at the age of 53 he became ill. His entire body became racked with pain and he lost all the hair on his head. In complete agony, the world's only billionaire could buy anything he wanted, but he could only digest milk and crackers. An associate wrote, "He could not sleep, would not smile and nothing in life meant anything to him." His personal, highly skilled physicians predicted he would die within a year. That year passed agonizingly slow. As he approached death he awoke one morning with the vague remembrances of a dream. He could barely recall the dream but knew it had something to do with not being able to take any of his successes

with him into the next world. The man who could control the business world suddenly realized he was not in control of his own life. He was left with a choice. He called his attorneys, accountants, and managers and announced that he wanted to channel his assets to hospitals, research, and mission work. On that day John D. Rockefeller established his foundation. This new direction eventually led to the discovery of penicillin, cures for current strains of malaria, tuberculosis and diphtheria. The list of discoveries resulting from his choice is enormous. But perhaps the most amazing part of Rockefeller's story is that the moment he began to give back a portion of all that he had earned, his body's chemistry was altered so significantly that he got better. It looked as if he would die at 53 but he lived to be 98. Rockefeller learned gratitude and gave back from his wealth. Doing so made him whole. It is one thing to be healed it is another to be made whole.

Appeal

- There are some
 - who are leaders
 - who have not
 - give a penny
 - to building project.
- I'm asking you
 - change your priorities.

- Put this first
 - this is time sensitive
 - everything else can wait.
- There are some pledges
- that were frankly
 - anemic
 - feeble
 - faithless
 - offer a chance
 - make a pledge.
 - That reflects faith
 - and sacrifice.

