

**ABATT**  
**Haggai**  
 Christian Life Assembly  
 Jim Hoffman

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The Minor Prophets

**The Prophet Haggai**

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The Minor Prophets

Prophet	Year-Approx
Obadiah	800 BC
Joel	801 BC
Jonah	790 BC
Amos	740 BC
Hosea	730 BC
Micah	720 BC
Nahum	640 BC
Zephaniah	620 BC
Habakkuk	605 BC
Babylonian Exile	590 BC
Haggai	520 BC
Zechariah	500 BC
Malachi	450 BC

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**“and calls into existence the things that do not exist”**

Isaiah 45:1 Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: 2 “I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. 4 For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me. 5 I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, 6 that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. 7 I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the Lord, who does all these things. 4

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**The Minor Prophets**

- The Book of Haggai was written in approximately 520 B.C. and Haggai is the author – 1:1 In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ESV
- Haggai was the first of the “Post Exilic” prophets – those prophets who arose and spoke after the 70 years of Babylonian captivity.

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**The Minor Prophets**

- In 537 BC Israel is given permission from King Cyrus of Persia to begin their return home. (Cyrus is supplanted by Darius by the time Haggai writes)
- 70 years had passed while Judah was stuck in a foreign land, under a pagan government, and because God willed it, they made it through.
- Around 520 BC the procession back home begins with a priest named Joshua and a descendant of David named Zerubbabel.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Their stated mission was to return home and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, both of which had been reduced to rubble.
- It looks like the future is very bright for these returning exiles, but not so much from Haggai's point of view.
- Life in reinhabited Jerusalem looks tainted to him by the Babylonian affect.

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### The Minor Prophets

- **The back story** – when Joshua and Zerubbabel returned from Babylon they and their crew were all systems "go" to rebuild the temple.
- However, after they got started local opposition arose from the Samaritans in the area and Darius was not willing to step in and settle the dispute.
- The "rebuild team" became discouraged by the feud and what often happens when we get discouraged? We quit!

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### The Minor Prophets

**The presence of opposition is not evidence you are missing your call.**

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The Minor Prophets

• Hag 1:2 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord." 3 Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, 4 "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins? 5 Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. 6 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." ESV

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The Minor Prophets

There is a difference between God's judgment and his discipline. God's judgment was seen in the Babylonian captivity. His discipline can be seen in his withholding of temporal blessings now that his people are back in Jerusalem.

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The Minor Prophets

Can you be going through God's chastening and not know it?

Can you become aware God is chastening you and not know why?

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### The Minor Prophets

- The people of God contend that it's not that they don't want to spend the time, money, and effort to rebuild the temple – it's just not the right time. 😊
- In response God asks through Haggai, **"Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?"**.
- Today we see the same from many Christians where timing is cited as the reason for our disobedience. 😞 13

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### The Minor Prophets

"Yes, I want to serve others someday, but I just sense the Lord telling me the timing isn't right."

"I want to start tithing, but I have bills to pay so I am waiting on the Lord to show me when the time is right".

"We know we really should get married instead of living together, but we just don't have peace about it at this time."

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### The Minor Prophets

This is one of the great tragedies of our day – Christians think what they think trumps what God has said!

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### The Minor Prophets

- Haggai writes, “**consider your ways**”, which we might express as, “Are you blind? Look around you!”
- “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**.”
- Mark this down – God will not let his disobedient children be comfortable. (Thank you, Lord!)

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### The Minor Prophets

#### Hebrews 12:5-8

And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. 6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Haggai 1:7 Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. 8 Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, **that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified**, says the Lord.
- The people have a need they may not even know – they needed to put God first.
- “Go up”, “bring wood”, and “build” – God is interested in Israel putting him first and he also wants the temple built because he has a world to save!

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### The Minor Prophets

- Haggai’s message was a hard one to deliver because those who are in rebellion are rarely anxious for correction.
- In fact, everything Haggai tells them was self evident and should have already been top of mind with the people.
- **However, having the messenger of God clearly point out the obvious still carries weight – sitting under the sound of the Word still matters.**

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### The Minor Prophets

- There can be a relationship between how much the people of God honor him and how they fare in this world.
- In this case, Haggai was quite clear the reason Israel was struggling in nearly every area of their lives was due to their failure to honor God.
- “Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins?”

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### The Minor Prophets

- In Haggai’s day, the temple of God, when one was standing, could be rightly called “the house of God”.
- The temple was the place God came to meet with his people – but it was limited to one man, one time per year.
- When God chides Israel for living in better quarters than he was afforded, it was accurate, and it was also to spur them on to do the right thing.

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The Minor Prophets

Since God’s ultimate plan was not to live in houses made by hands, his pointing out that the temple needed work was not for him, but for them – they were placing greater importance on the temporal than the spiritual.

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The Minor Prophets

- Just prior to this, when Israel’s 70 years of captivity had ended, God sent the Persians to crush the Babylonians and free the Jews from captivity.
- The Persians allowed the Jews who wanted to return to Jerusalem to do so and even helped to fund the rebuilding of the temple.
- When we show a desire to serve and honor God, he is likely to bring his blessings to us, sometimes even using the wicked. (Persians)

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The Minor Prophets

Because the Babylonians were intent on enslaving the Jews and the Persians were inclined to set them free, maybe we should see the Babylonians and the Persians as mere cast members in this production of God.

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**The Minor Prophets**

- Haggai 2:3 'Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?'
- The temple Zerubbabel is building is but a shadow of Solomon's temple – God even has Haggai ask, "does this temple seem puny to you?".
- Anyone who had seen Solomon's temple (70 years ago) would be unimpressed with Zerubbabel's.

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**The Minor Prophets**

- Part of Haggai's task was to convince Israel that though the temple Zerubbabel would build would not be as "plush" as Solomon's temple, it was still God's will for them to have a temple.
- There was still work to do in showing the world God would accept a substitute for the sinner.
- Whether it was Solomon's, Zerubbabel's, Herod's, or the temple that will be built for the end times, they are all temporary structures.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Roman King Herod would use the foundation built by Zerubbabel to erect a new and magnificent temple for the Jewish people to win their favor. They do not compare well.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Haggai 2:15 Now then, consider from this day onward. Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the Lord, 16 how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. 17 I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to me, declares the Lord. 18 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: 19 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."

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### The Minor Prophets

- Now God's word to his people is akin to Malachi 3:10, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **Test me in this,**"
- God had withdrawn his blessing, so he challenges his people to assess where they are today and then watch what God would do for them because of obedience.
- Hint, hint, Israel; God is saying what he had been saying for centuries – **obey and be blessed.**

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The Minor Prophets

**When God wants to discipline us, he doesn't have to curse us so that things will not be well in our lives. Sometimes all he needs to do is expose us to life apart from his blessing.**

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The Minor Prophets

- Luke 11:27 As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." 28 He replied, **"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."**
- Many in our churches today appear to be on a willy-nilly pursuit of the blessings of God.
- Perhaps we will get a form of what God blessed Judah with – the Babylonians!

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Questions?

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