

Christ in Prophecy
Jesus in the Old Testament 42
The Lord Returns (Haggai & Zechariah)
Key Verses: Haggai 1:4, 2:4-5; Zechariah 1:3, 14:4-5, 9
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Opening

Tim Moore: Welcome to Christ in Prophecy! I'm Tim Moore, your host and the Senior Evangelist of Lamb & Lion Ministries. Our Jesus in the Old Testament series has arrived at two books that were written by prophets who were among the Jewish exiles in Babylon. Haggai and Zechariah emphasized the urgency of returning to the Lord, and returning to Israel to rebuild the temple and worship Him in their own land.

Part 1

Tim Moore: I'm excited to be joined today by a man who wears many hats. Steve Toadvine is a graduate of Asbury University and Northwestern University Medical School. A practicing doctor, he is a hospital administrator in Kentucky and serves on a variety of corporate and non-profit boards, including the Board of Trustees of Lamb & Lion Ministries.

Steve, I'm always reminded of the Gospel writer, Luke, whenever we are together because in addition to being a physician, he like you was glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ in all he said and did, and that is obvious whenever I am around you as well.

Steve Toadvine: Well, that is very kind of you, Tim, and it's a pleasure to be with you. Thank you for the invitation.

Tim Moore: Now, see I thought Steve perhaps you would be joining us from Kentucky, but based on your surroundings there, at least the background, where are you, or at least what is represented behind you?

Steve Toadvine: Well, I am in Kentucky at the moment, but I choose for the background here on Zoom a photo that I took a few years ago, actually on the ruins of Babylon. Here I had the opportunity to visit Iraq twice in the last few years, I was working with a hospital there in Karbala. So, these are the ruins of the city of Babylon with some partial restoration, really directed I think initially by Saddam Hussein. But remarkable to me in reading the passage from Isaiah chapter 13, and Babylon will never be inhabited again, and it is desolate as you can see in this photo.

Tim Moore: Well, I tell you what we could have a whole another show talking about some of the volunteering work that you do around the world impacting people groups in parts of the world that many people would think very dangerous, but you go there sharing not only your

skills as a physician but the love of Christ. And so, again, we may have to have a separate conversation about that someday. But today we want to jump into these two books, Haggai and Zechariah that may seem to many to have very little in common, but in fact they were contemporaries who both advocated for the Jewish exiles to remember, they wanted the Jewish people to remember. Haggai called on the exiles to remember returning to the Promise Land, in other words to remember their commitment to rebuild the Temple. And Zechariah whose very name literally means God remembers, urged the people to remember why the nations of Israel and Judah had been disciplined. What do you have to say about these two individual prophets?

Steve Toadvine: Oh, well, the beautiful depiction in both of these books. And it strikes me even looking at this background of Babylon, you had Zechariah who lived here in Babylon, and Haggai probably as well, and they left what at the time was the height of the world at that time, probably the most populous city in the world, and they returned to a town that had been destroyed and the temple ransacked. And at that time they left glory and returned to just shambles. But today we know what we see in Jerusalem, and what we see in Israel, we see God's promise, God's faithfulness, God's remembrance of His chosen people. What we don't have today, right now, is the temple. But the comparison from what we see here at Babylon and what we see today in Jerusalem is striking to me.

Tim Moore: Well, before we jump into Zechariah, which is the longer of these two particular books, let's consider Haggai for a few minutes. Haggai's prophecy can be very accurately dated because he ties the day that the word of Lord came to him, to specific days in the reign of King Darius. As a matter of fact, the second year of his reign, and Darius of course was the king of Persian. So, whether from 1:1, 1:15, from 2:1, 2:10, he gives very specific dates, and we know that these all happened within about a four month period in the year 520 BC. And Haggai challenged the people who had returned from exile to get their priorities right, in other words through him the Lord rhetorically asked, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house," the Temple of God, "lies desolate?" What a timely message for us today.

Steve Toadvine: Yeah, one of the things that strikes me in Haggai very early is in verse 2, the verse reads, "This people says, it's not time to rebuild." That people, that group of people, that society in their own minds decided it was not time to build. And we look back through history so many times where this people was wrong, this people made decisions in complete defiance of God. And here Haggai calls them back, and Zechariah as well too in his early words, to repent and return. So, a beautiful reminder in the beginnings of both books there and confirmed in the book of Ezra as Ezra records the history, how the temple was constructed with the urging of Haggai and Zechariah under the leadership of Zerubbabel.

Tim Moore: Yes, his powerful leadership, and even Zerubbabel was given a very key promise for himself personally. I think another poignant insight from the prophet Haggai, this so called minor prophet, is a very emboldening statement that constitutes one of other key verses, and that is, "But now, take courage, take courage and work for I the Lord am with you, My Spirit is abiding in your midst. Do not fear." And I just say, wow, that is enough to make you want to jump out of the pews and shout Hallelujah! Because even as we discern that the world is falling apart, we have the assurance, as Jesus reflected, "greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world." I say, Jesus, that is captured in of course in 1 John 4:4, but greater is He who is in us. And so, what an emboldening promise.

Steve Toadvine: Amen. In both books there is encouragement to work, to extend our energy, to make great effort in our service to the Lord. But in both books it's not our effort that wins the day, it is the Spirit at work within us, and it is the Spirit who accomplishes it. So, I think it is a beautiful picture in our own Christian lives, but it certainly applies to the history of Israel and God's plan for all time. But, in my own life that is a great reminder, is to work, but don't attribute success to my work, or don't assume that my work accomplishes success, it's the Lord.

Tim Moore: Well, although Haggai is a very encouraging book as we just said, I want to turn our attention now to Zechariah because what a powerful testimony he gives, not only as a prophet but also as a priest who returned with the exiles to Judah in about 538 BC, and again, he was a contemporary of Haggai, but wrote his book we think several years later in about 480 BC. And so, while we were corresponding about this book, you wrote "Zechariah paints a truly wonderful, full and vivid portrait of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." And so, Steve what are some of the manifestations of Jesus that you see within this prophetic book?

Steve Toadvine: Oh, it is incredible, Zechariah from beginning to end is about Jesus, all the way through. But that is Scripture right from Genesis to Revelation it is about Jesus all the way through. But in Zechariah there are so many descriptions of Christ that we are familiar with from the New Testament. The One that came riding in on the foal of the donkey. The One who was pierced. The One who will return. The One who was a servant. The Stone. The Branch. Also, the Conquering King. So many phrases depicting Jesus. The One who was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. But throughout, Zechariah is just a panorama of the life of Christ, and of the history of the world to that point, and to come.

Tim Moore: Well, all I can say is wow! Even as we scroll all those names that you are citing and others across the screen, what an amazing array of descriptions pointing to, again, the coming Messiah in Zechariah's day, but the Messiah we know of as Jesus Christ, and all in one Minor Prophet book.

Steve Toadvine: It is amazing. The more I read through this and reread Zechariah, it is not a complete Bible but it is the complete story, and over, and over again it points us to the resolution of history, to the establishment of Jesus' reign on earth in the Millennium.

Tim Moore: I appreciate you saying that because it does have an encapsulated, complete story right there within that one single book, and it gives us a preview of all of God's plan throughout the ages. And so, with that in mind it's oftentimes painful for me to realize that there are many pastors, and many so called theologians who attempt to deny the very important messages we find in these prophetic Scriptures, in these books of prophecy from the Old Testament. And here in the book of Zechariah in particular. And so, in his book, "God's Plan for the Ages," Dr. David Reagan shared the story of an evangelist and a seminary graduate at that who said to him, "Nothing in the book of Zechariah means with it says, because the whole book is apocalyptic." And when I think about that, that statement itself doesn't even make sense.

Steve Toadvine: You know I loved it when I read that book for the first time, because I believe that appeared early in the book. I mean it is sad. Sad, that so many pastors, theologians, seminarians would have that view, but Dr. Reagan's response to that was just perfect. First of all, apocalyptic simply means revelation, that's why it's called the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ our last book of the Bible. Apocalypse means revelation. So, to say that Zechariah is

Apocalyptic, yes, it is revelation that is divine revelation, but to say it doesn't mean what it says certainly denies the plain sense meaning of the entire book. And then as the late Charles Feinberg said, "What is unspiritual about Jesus Christ returning to visibly and physically reign on earth?" That is the kind of spiritual time I'm looking forward to experiencing.

Tim Moore: Amen. You know even as I think about that one of my favorite passages in this book, and another of our key verses is Zechariah 14:4 which says, "In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives." And you and I have stood together on that Mount of Olives looking down over the Eastern Gate and only imagining, but we don't have to fully imagine it's described right here in this passage when Jesus Christ sets foot again on the earth in His glorious Second Coming. He who ascended the Mount of Olives after His resurrection from the dead, of whom the angels said he would return again just the same way that He ascended to Heaven. The same Jesus will once again stand on the Mount of Olives, returning at the end of that seven years of Tribulation to destroy the armies arrayed around Israel, actually fighting against the Antichrist, in antagonism toward the Jewish people and Jesus Christ. And He will establish His Millennial Reign from the throne of his father David there on Mount Zion. Every time I go there my heart thrills because I can just visualize exactly what Zechariah is describing all the way through in chapter 14. I get excited about it, as you can tell, and you saw when we were there together in the Holy Land.

Steve Toadvine: It's wonderful. You know when I was thinking about my formative years growing up, and being in church on a regular basis, you know frequently there seemed to be a message in a sermon, or maybe in the Bible school classes, you know the disciples, silly, misguided disciples who were expecting an earthly messiah who would set up his kingdom on earth. And kind of the thought with it was they didn't really understand. But when you read passages like in Zechariah here, and you have the verse speaking of His First Coming, and then the second verse speaks of His Second Coming, you know the verse He comes riding in on the foal of a donkey, which He did coming down from the Mount of Olives. And then the next verse takes us forward to the future when He returns back to that Mount of Olives. But I have a better, I believe a better sense, and maybe I'm assuming something that is not true, but I can imagine His disciples understood these Scriptures, they knew that this Messiah would be reigning over all the earth, but they didn't know the timing. And as He rose, ascended back to Heaven from the Mount of Olives, they asked right before that, "Lord, are you going to set up the Kingdom now?" And the angel told them, "No, not now, but you will see Him returning in just the same way."

Tim Moore: Yes, as a matter of fact they were never criticized for their expectation that He would set up a kingdom. It thrills my heart to even imagine that 1,000 year reign, and that also is described here within the book of Zechariah, throughout the Old Testament, as a time when peace will cover the earth, righteousness, and holiness will mark so many aspects of what we think of as even mundane. At the very end of Zechariah, he describes how even the bells on the horses' bridles and the pots in the Lord's house will be inscribed, "Holy to the Lord." In other words, everything will be holy to the Lord when Jesus Christ reigns. I'm looking forward to that reign myself.

Steve Toadvine: Amen. You know even that last verse after that description, the last verse of the book seemed to be to my initial perception, seemed to be a bit anticlimactic after He's returned, His feet are set on the Mount of Olives, the enemies of Israel are defeated, He speaks

peace into existence. But that last verse of the book, “And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of host in that day.” Some of the translations will translate that word merchant or a worthless person, or an immoral person. But the thought of that as a merchant even a picture of Christ as He cleansed the Temple of the money changers, and the traders in the Temple, but the Temple will be completely pure, and His glory will fill it.

Tim Moore: You know you talk about Jesus purging the Temple, and driving out the money changers, I think we are given glimpses of other aspects of His First Coming ministry and His glorious Second Coming as you cited to me earlier in chapter 9, verse 9 it says, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation,” and there is that passage about Him coming on a colt, “the foal of a donkey.” But over and over again it speaks to Jesus coming triumphantly. And it doesn’t say that He’s going to speak comforting words to all the nations, He will rule with a rod of iron. And He will literally speak peace into existence by reigning, again, with absolute control over the activity of the entire earth, and everyone will give Him the honor He is due, some grudgingly I would argue, but all will recognize Him as King of kings in that glorious Millennial reign.

Steve Toadvine: Amen. Amen.

Tim Moore: Well, I think it’s important that we reiterate for our viewers, and just to make the point that these so called Minor Prophets are not minor in terms of their revelation, or their significance regarding prophecies pointing to the Messiah. They’ve been labeled minor because they are shorter than the so called Major Prophets, but having said that there is much to dive into. So, tell us a little bit more about the man Zechariah, even relative to the picture behind you.

Steve Toadvine: Well, probably born in Babylon, returned with his grandfather, with his grandfather Iddo from Babylon, probably in 538 when the decree had gone out from Cyrus that the Jewish people could return. Other passages in the Bible indicate his father was actually Berechiah who had been deceased by the point that Zechariah returned. We read about Zechariah again in Matthew where Jesus tells us, that he was murdered between the Temple and the altar. And my question there is why? Why? A man who was so close to God, who received direct revelation from the Lord, who was there to encourage the rebuilding of the Temple, who was there to remind the Jewish people of the future, and the future glory of Jerusalem and the Lord’s rule, and you think about that. But you realize as many men and women of God draw the wrath of those around them. But the thought of Zechariah being martyred, as with any martyr, why? It makes zero sense, except that we live in an evil world.

Tim Moore: Well, even you saying that Steve I hadn’t thought about this but that makes Zechariah himself a type of Christ. In other words, he came proclaiming the Word of the Lord, calling people to remember what they had covenanted with God, and to restore His Temple, restore worship of the one, true and living God. And yet, there’s always going to be folks who come against that message, who denounce God’s very prophetic voices to this day, and the ones who are calling people to repentance, and they rejected His Son who came with a message of salvation, with a message calling people back into relationship with God, and they killed him. So, Zechariah becomes a type of Christ even in his own demise.

Steve Toadvine: That's right. The only perfect One who ever walked the earth was hung on the cross.

Tim Moore: Well, speaking, another type of Christ, Zechariah as you point out was a priest, a priest who was serving in the Temple when he died. But he describes a vision of a coming high priest, who in one day would remove the iniquity of Israel. And obviously that is a clear reference to the Messiah, and points not only to His work at the cross, but obviously His Second Coming when all of these promises are realized.

Steve Toadvine: Well, you see these visions that Christ is the one who will bear the roles, will combine the roles of all prophet, and priest, and king, and that He provides forgiveness. He provides the cleansing of sin. And the vision of Joshua, the high priest, standing before the Lord in filthy rags, and Satan accusing, and the Lord says, "I will remove that iniquity. I will remove that iniquity in one day." It's a picture of Israel as a nation, and their future restoration, but it's also a picture of each of us as it describes Joshua there, a brand plucked from the fire. And you and I and all who have entered a relationship with Jesus Christ, we have been plucked from the fire. Thank God!

Tim Moore: Well, there is one other picture that I always thrill about that is mentioned in Zechariah, and also in Psalm, Zechariah 4:7, 10:4 mention a cornerstone or a top stone. And of course, Psalm 118:22 says, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone." What does those references regard? And how does that play out in the life of our Messiah?

Steve Toadvine: Well, you know we read the passage from the Psalms, "the stone that the builders rejected became the chief corner stone." Christ can be a foundation stone, a stone of building, a stone of stumbling. And here in Zechariah it is also at one point that the stone is described as having seven eyes, which indicate the omniscience, and the all knowing of Christ, and God the Father.

Tim Moore: I think one of the keys that also help me understand just from an architectural standpoint is you think, how do you take a stone that's been rejected and reinsert it as a foundational cornerstone? That is a meaning that is insinuated, but I think another meaning is to be a top stone, or a keystone. So, when you go to Israel, when you go to some of these ancient lands that had arches built within their structure, the most important stone, the one that held everything else together was that stone that fit at the very top that all of the other stone leaned in upon, and if you take out that stone the whole edifice crumbles to the ground. And so, the stone that was rejected becomes the stone that holds everything else together. And I think that is a beautiful picture of our Lord and Savior as well.

Steve Toadvine: It is. So much there. It's all in all, it's Christ, we can stumble over Him or He can be the foundation of our life.

Tim Moore: Well, there are so many visions that we could pull out of this book, and quite frankly we ought to come back and revisit them in greater detail at another time. But Steve what would be some closing thoughts that you would like to share regarding the application, the practical applications of Zechariah in particular, let alone Haggai to us in today's day and age?

Steve Toadvine: Well, the theme throughout really both books, they are speaking of the immediate rebuilding of the Temple, but they are both speaking of events yet to come, of the future glory of Jerusalem and Christ reigning, and the final resolution of the Tribulation and the onset of the Millennium. So, they're both pointing us forward to the future in anticipation, so I think that is overall the main theme and what we ought to be taking away, what we ought to be concentrating on each day.

But really great, practical applications for our daily Christian life in both of them. Zechariah begins with a call to repentance, that is where we all began our Christian walk. Repentance. Forgiveness. And then service, we are called to work. We are encouraged to work. We are encouraged to work with great energy, but in that to recognize that we are only empowered by the Spirit, by the Holy Spirit.

And then our service, our service that we give to the Lord, that is empowered by the Spirit. We really haven't talked about today was really a fascinating little story here in Zechariah with this delegation from Bethel to come ask about fasting. And the Lord just rebukes them through Zechariah and says, "Was it actually for Me that you were fasting?" The implication clearly is that it was not, that their motives were selfish. So, in our service is the motivation of our service, whether it is for our own self-gratification, or self-glorification, or if our motivation is purely to honor and glorify the Lord, out of our love for Him. So, I think Zechariah we see that the picture of the Christian life, from repentance, forgiveness, service, love, and then back to the overarching theme anticipating, anticipating meaning being united with Him, in His eternal kingdom.

Tim Moore: Well, you know we started off by talking about these two men who called on the people in that day and age to remember. And Zechariah's name, which means, the Lord remembers. So, even as we reflect, we are remembering the promises of God that point to the future coming of our Messiah. So, our remembering is not just backward looking, it is forward anticipating. And as our title describes for this particular episode both of these great Minor Prophets point to the fact that the Lord will return.

Steve, I can't thank you enough for joining me today. I can't thank you enough for your willingness to serve the Lord in all the ways that He has gifted you, but especially with us here at Lamb & Lion Ministries, as a very important part of our Board of Trustees. And so, for those watching today I hope that you will remember what the Lord has promised to you personally, and to all of us who put our trust in Him, that He is coming. That He will rescue us from the wrath to come. That He is preparing a place for us, and that we will be gathered together to dwell with Him forever. Until that glorious day comes, this is Tim Moore for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, Godspeed.

End of Program