

# Little is much

Compiled by Ps O M Ngwenya

- In the world we live where people think that more is better and less is not good, the Bible has many examples of peoples, places or events which express the idea that little is much.**
- Of course, the idea that much is little is equally true.**

- **Much is little, as in the example of Nebuchadnezzar, the most powerful king on earth of his time. At the height of his power, he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" (Dan 4:30 NIV).**
- **Dan. 4:33 says, Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird. (Dan 4:33 NIV).**

- **Much is little, Jesus clearly implies it in Matt 16:26, “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”**
- **How about the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:16-20, ““The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."'" "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’”**
- **We could go on with more instances from the Bible that say that much is little, but these suffice.**
- **Let us now focus on “little is much.”**

## LITTLE IS MUCH

- **From the OT, we have the example of the little army of Gideon to fight the Midianites and deliver Israel.**
- **Then the little weapon of David against Goliath.**
- **You could also consider the widow of Zarephath**
- **Little is much when God is in it**

- **From the NT, we have the little offering of the poor widow (Mark 12:42-44), which was much more than the big amount of money put in the treasury by the rich.**
- **Then we can cite the example of the disciples (Matthew 18:1-10), who thought that children are too little for the kingdom of God. In other words, the kingdom of God is reserved only for the big and the great.**
- **So Jesus asked the question, “who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven” Then He himself answered by calling a little child, and said, “whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”**
- **How about the only five loaves and two fish of that little boy which Jesus blessed to feed about 5000 men (Matt 14:13-21)? Little is much.**

- **But let us not be mistaken. Because just being little can be very dangerous. For the little to be much, it must be qualified.**
- **I would like to propose that that qualification or the reasons for little to be much can be found and illustrated in the biblical record of the reconstruction of the temple of Jerusalem in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Haggai 2:9 says, “The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,” says the Lord Almighty”**

# LITTLE IS MUCH IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF TEMPLE

- **The year was around 536 BC. It was the time for the reconstruction of the temple of Jerusalem as decreed by Cyrus the Great (2 Chron 36:23; Ezra 1:1-4).**
- **The vexation of God's people over what they thought as "little" in the reconstruction of the temple occurred at least two times: (1) at the laying of the foundation and (2) at the resumption of the construction.**
- **Read Ezra 3:10-13. We do not know for certain how far the building was going up, but there was not much that was done because of the interferences of the enemies.**
- **The Jews felt they were so little and powerless to face the opposition. So the building stopped. And people went their own way to build their own houses.**
- **Then and only 20 years later (that is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Darius the Great), Haggai the prophet came to call the people to consider their ways and encourage them to resume the construction.**

- **Haggai 2:3. “It looks as if it is nothing compared with the first temple of Solomon which was far more glorious, more splendid.”**
- **And the Lord continues to step in to say that “little is much.” There was no need to worry. “The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house.” “Little is much.” But the “little” here is clearly qualified. Here are the reasons which are explicitly given.**

- Hag 2:4, “I [the Lord] am with you” (i.e. “my Spirit remains among you”). If the Lord is not with them, if the Spirit of the Lord does not remain with them, then little as they are, little they will be.
- Little they are doing, and little it will be.
- Both Moses and Joshua his successor realized this. And just the thought of being alone made them tremble. And God promised, “As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. . . Be strong and of good courage, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. “Little is much when God is with you.”

- **Hag 2:7, “The desire of all nations will come and I will fill this house with glory.”**
- **That is when the promise was fulfilled: when Jesus, the Desire of all nations, came to the temple.**
- **God himself was present in the person of Jesus Christ in temple.**
- **God’s glory was back and the temple, which was nothing compared to the first temple became more glorious. “Little is much when God is in it.”**
- **Hag 2:9, when the Spirit of the Lord is with His people, and Jesus Christ is with His people (and walked among His people as Rev 1 says), then peace comes in that place, God’s peace is granted.**
- **There is peace in the presence of God’s Spirit. There is peace when Jesus is present.**

- **Unfortunately, the Jews did not realize that. That very temple which was considered “little” and “nothing” by older people in the time of Haggai as far as the physical building was concerned was the object of pride for the Jews in the time of Jesus.**
- **The disciples reflected their sentiment, “Teacher, see what massive stones! What magnificent buildings!” (Mark 13:1).**
- **It’s true, that temple was considered as one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world.**
- **But you see how history can be so easily forgotten. The Jews did not recognize the one whose presence made the glory of that temple greater than the first one.**
- **And worse, they denied and crucified Him. Little is much when God is in it.**
- **Much is little when God is not in it.**
- **When God left the temple, the temple was destroyed. No stone left on another stone.**

- **Do you feel “little”? Do you want your “little” to be much? The Bible has the definite answer: “Little is much, when God is in it.”**
- **Commit the little that you have to the Lord**
- **And commit the much that you have to the Lord**
- **It is of significance only when its placed in the hands of the Lord**
- **But We all want big/great things: big house, big car, big bank account, big degree, big job and big position, big recognition, you name it.**

- **The point is not that we should be satisfied with little so there's no need to improve or to grow.**
- **God himself wanted the Israelites to be a great nation and its people the head, not the tail.**
- **The point is that we should let God be there;**
- **We should place it in His hands.**
- **God challenges us today to put Him in it.**
- **He will grant us peace that surpasses all understanding.**
- **In our life, in our family, in our work, in our project, in our future, in our service and ministry for the Lord. Let us be faithful in what we do.**
- **God is always faithful.**
- **Commit every project and everything that you to the Lord and see the difference it will make.**

# Illustration: "Only a boy!" and God

- In Scotland many years ago, a faithful minister was waited upon one day by one of his deacons, who seemed to be under a great burden.
- "I came early to meet you," he said. "I have something on my conscience to tell you. There must be something wrong with your preaching and work; there has been only one person added to the church in a whole year, and he is only a boy."
- The old minister went into the pulpit that day with a grieved and heavy heart. He lingered in the church to pray, after the rest had gone. He wished to be alone. He had labored hard for years, only to be told at last that his labor was no longer blessed.
- At last he became conscious that he was not alone, as he supposed. It was "only a boy."
- As the "little boy" approached, the minister asked, "Well, Robert, what is it?"
- "Do you think if I were willing to work hard for an education I could ever become a preacher?--A preacher?—Perhaps a missionary?"
- There was a long pause. Tears filled the eyes of the old minister. At length he said,
- "This heals the ache in my heart, Robert.
- I see the divine hand now. Yes, I think you will become a preacher."
- That boy was Robert Moffat. He was "only a boy," but the measure of the old minister's reward will be found in the great fruit of the labors of Robert Moffat, the great African missionary.—*The Sunday School Teacher*.

Little is much when God is in it

- **Commit all your plans to the Lord**
- **Commit the little that remains to the Lord**
- **Be faithful with every opportunity that God avails to you**
- **And witness the goodness of the Lord**
- **Be blessed in this new week**

**1. In the harvest field now ripened  
There's a work for all to do;  
Hark! the voice of God is calling,  
To the harvest calling you.**

**2. Does the place you're called to labor  
Seem so small and little known?  
It is great if God is in it,  
And He'll not forget His own.**

***Refrain:***

**Little is much when God is in it!  
Labor not for wealth or fame;  
There's a crown, and you can win it,  
If you go in Jesus' name.**

**3. Are you laid aside from service,  
Body worn from toil and care?  
You can still be in the battle,  
In the sacred place of prayer.**

**4. When the conflict here is ended  
And our race on earth is run,  
He will say, if we are faithful,  
"Welcome home, My child—well done!"**