



By My Spirit

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January 2006

Zechariah 4:1-10a

When reading
Zechariah's vision
I believe God

showed me some principles that I would like to pass on to you. Although the message was given to Zerubbabel, we may apply it to ourselves, as well, as the apostle Paul said:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..." (2 Timothy 3:16)

First, we ought to go back in history and view some events. Zechariah, whose name means "The Lord Memorizes", who, along with the prophet Haggai, returned to Jerusalem to encourage the people and help rebuild the ruined temple, wrote the book bearing his own name. Ezra 6:14 reads:

"...So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo..."

The refugees began to return from exile to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. Approximately 50,000 refugees, who were among the poorest of all Israeli captives, returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua.

The Israelites soon repaired the altar and began to rebuild the temple, yet apathy set in as opposition from neighboring nations put a stop to the building by permission from the Persian government. For 12 years the rebuilding ceased under the oppression and their own preoccupation with other things.

Therefore, Zechariah and Haggai pleaded with the people to return to Lord and His ways and to rebuild

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the temple. Just as they prophesied and directed the people, so I believe Zechariah wants to encourage us today to complete the deed entrusted to us by God.

▶ WE ARE CHOSEN BY GOD FOR HIS SERVICE.

In Haggai 2:23 we read as God ends his message to Zerubbabel, the Judean governor who along with Joshua was building the temple, calling him and the people to repent for their laziness and apathy as they had begun to take care for their homes; God's house and His work were no longer their focus. God chose Zerubbabel just as He has chosen us to do His work.

"In that day," says the LORD of hosts, "I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel," says the LORD, "and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you," says the LORD of hosts."

The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians:

"Just as He chosen us in Him before the

foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him." (Ephesians 1:4)

Peter says:

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9)

In other words, we are His testimony, His priests who should build a spiritual temple; we are grafted as God's people. Therefore, our relationship with God is more important than our job, success, wealth, or knowledge. God has chosen us to be His and to represent Him to the others.

And as a holy priesthood God calls us to rebuild and cleanse His home as individuals and as His church in order that his glory may shine again. However, the glory we expect to come, according to Zechariah, will not be the result of human power but a renewal of God's Spirit.

Zechariah 4:3 records a vision of two olive trees and a lamp stand:

"Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left," showing us the priestly and kingly service of Zerubbabel and Joshua.

★ **Personal and church renewal, as well as further rebuilding of the temple, is possible only by the Spirit.**

In addition, the olives represent permanent oil wells, men who will lead people into life only possible through the power of Holy Spirit.

► **PERSONAL AND CHURCH RENEWAL, AS WELL AS FURTHER REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, IS POSSIBLE ONLY BY THE SPIRIT.**

"This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts." (4:6)

Today many believe that they should be successful, have political power, and finances for success. But God says: *"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit."*

Our service will only have eternal value when it is done by God's Spirit alone. The refugees who returned to Jerusalem were weak, tortured by their enemy, tired, discouraged, and poor yet they had God on their side.

We are limited and therefore we must not rely on our own strength or ability. Many become weak and cannot fight any more so they give up; some think that they will succeed with political connections and money, however no one should rely on man.

Nowadays there are churches that rely

man's tactics but few of them who trust in God. Such churches without God's power are unable to do any thing of lasting value.

Therefore, we must rely upon God!

Isaiah, in the 31st chapter, describes the fall of Judean kingdom because they asked for military help of other nations against Egypt. They did not want to pay the price for asking God.

"Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, And rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many, And in horsemen because they are very strong, But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, Nor seek the LORD! Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out His hand, both he who helps will fall, and he who is helped will fall down; they all will perish together." (Isaiah 31:1-3)

We cannot do God's deeds in the physical realm. Apostle Paul that our battle is not by physical means although we live in the flesh.

Jesus entered the service full of Holy Spirit and dependent on God's power.

★ **Such churches without God's power are unable to do any thing of lasting value.**

Luke 4:1 says: "Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan..." and 18 reads:

" The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Jesus did not say: "I have completed theology, read two books on healing and evangelization, and attended seminars on inner healing and treatment therefore, I have God for my Father and now I can work". Jesus relied on God's power – the power of the Holy Spirit!

We see the same situation on the day of Pentecost. Why did they wait for God's power? There were a lot of them who saw and knew all and witnessed everything. They simply could have gone and testified all they saw and heard by Jesus. They had knowledge.

★ **God shall have compassion on us when we work according to His Spirit.**

However, the Scriptures say that they waited for God. They knew that God's work could only be done only in cooperation with Him.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.." (Acts 1:8)

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:2-4)

We constantly need the presence of the Holy Spirit because only with Him can God's home be built and His Kingdom enlarged; only with Him can we walk in the joy of the Lord and obtain all that He has for us.

Therefore Zerubbabel and Joshua are referred to as olive trees symbolizing permanent oil wells and the Scriptures refer to them as leaders who lead men into a life that is only possible according to the power of the Holy Spirit.

“So He said, “These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.” (Zechariah 4:14)

When God refers to them as his witnesses, he continues: *“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit.”(6b)*. This is why God gave Zechariah a vision of lamp stand and olive trees in order that they would know that this task can only be accomplished by relying on God’s mighty power.

We cannot rely on new buildings, donations, political connections, people we know or don’t know, the number of people we have, or our eagerness; we can only rely upon God’s power; He is our strength by which we do that which, by human standards, is impossible.

► **EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE IF WE TRUST GOD.**

God talks further to Zerubbabel through the prophet Zechariah:

“ Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!!” (Zechariah 4:7)

In other words the rebuilding the temple was not by human achievement but by God’s power.

God shall have compassion on us when we work according to His Spirit. No problem, obstacle, or enemy will be able to stand in our way; all will be defeated when we rely on His power. Everything according to His will can be realized.

Difficulties may temporarily seem as great as a mountain but by God’s Spirit moving through us they will be overthrown.

One morning when Jesus left with his disciples to Jerusalem they noticed “a fig tree withered from the roots.” Then Peter remembered and said:

“ Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.” So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.” (Mark 11:20-23)

Jesus said: *“ Have faith in God ”*. Trust in God, not in your mind or your own strength, and all that seem

impossible will be solved!

God further talks to Zerubbabel:

“The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.” (Zechariah 4:9)

After many years of discouragement Zerubbabel knew that he would see the realization of God’s intention. The temple was finished in 516 B.C. and it brought great joy to Jewish people.

This event is described in Ezra 6:14.15

“So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.”

Each opposition was overcome. God

overwhelmed all historical events, all enemy powers, and did what was impossible to man. The temple was rebuilt.

► **IN THE PROCESS OF GOD’S DEEDS, HUMBLE BEGINNING MUST NOT BE DESPISED.**

“For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.” (Zechariah 4:10)

Many of the older Jews were discouraged when they realized that the new temple would not match the size and splendor of the temple built during king Solomon’s reign, David’s son. But bigger and more beautiful does not necessarily mean better.

What you do for God may seem small and insignificant. Your service, though the vision may be big, might only have few people, but God rejoices in what is right, not necessarily in size. Therefore, be faithful in small things and opportunities given by God. We should begin where we are, do what we can, and leave results to God.

In Ezra, after the foundations of the temple were laid and the opposition overcome the words of Zechariah 4:10 came true. The people shouted for joy

★ **In the process of God’s deeds, humble beginning must not be despised.**

because the foundations were laid. They did not despise small beginnings and saw plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel because the rebuilding had begun.

“Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel!

“When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: “For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel.” Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid..” (Ezra 3:2; 10-11)

The Hebrew word **“ma ze”** translated as despised can also mean **“to refuse, reject.”** And is often used in the context when God despised his people.

Do we reject God’s will and His Spirit? Do we reject being at the place, time, position and service

where we are less visible? Do we refuse the beginnings? Do we reject His deeds and take things into our hands? If yes, we do not walk with God’s Spirit and do not see with God’s eyes.

If you despise, you will not go far. All who succeeded according to Bible began with small things. Jesus at one point said: *“Who cannot be faithful in small things how he can be faithful in bigger ones.”*

Mainly all that was born of the Spirit is at first small. The same is with the Kingdom of God, says Jesus:

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.” (Matthew 13: 31-32)

This is life in the Spirit, service in Spirit and church in Spirit – such is our life, too. At first it is small but if we are faithful God will multiply. Growth and action by the power of the Spirit is top quality!

The temple was completed but God’s power was needed. A year or more passed – in God’s Kingdom nothing is

acquired in a hurry; all must happen in God's way at God's time.

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," Says the LORD of hosts."

A Chinese proverb says: *"A man who moves mountains starts by carrying smaller stones."*

John Gillies, English Baptist preacher and theologian in his classic *"Awakening events"* written in 1795 described, among other things, men of awakening:

"They are brave and strong-willed people. Enemy can arise, friend may oppose but they still go forth not being afraid of anyone... people of prayer... people of patience. They are not discouraged if they work hard and long and see no results. They don't give up and don't get tired when doing good..."

They surely depended on God. They did not give up on Him or the things God entrusted them. They were satisfied with the place and time of

God's events and trusted in his power. Therefore, God used many of them. It's time to stand up and not give up. Don't despise the days of small beginnings and do God's deeds with his Spirit.

What do we do in our own strength? What deeds of the flesh do we hold fast to? Do we give up or lose faith and hope? How do we fight, by the flesh or by the Spirit? What relations or things should we abandon? Why do we abandon His deeds so easily? Why do we turn away from Jesus so easily?

It's high time we surrender ourselves to Him and live according to his Spirit who will carry us by faith to the end so we shall have more victories, more joy and more strength.

★ **All who succeeded according to Bible began with small things.**

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