

THINGS LARGE AND SMALL

“Who despises the day of small things?” (Zech 4:10)

As we begin our study of things “large and small” let us remember that the Sovereign of the Universe has a huge agenda. His plans are enormous beyond human comprehension. Not only will He bring everything and everyone in the entire universe into submission to Christ (Eph. 1:10), but the universe itself will be completely destroyed and replaced. The present heavens and earth are temporal. The new heaven and the new earth will be eternal.

Perhaps the words of our text will be more meaningful if we frame them in their historical context.

- The Temple of Solomon was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.
- God appointed Cyrus, the king of Persia, to rebuild the temple (Jer. 36:23), and also the city of Jerusalem (Is. 45:13).
- Zerubbabel started to rebuild the temple in 536 B.C, but then stopped for 16 years because of opposition.
- Haggai was the first of the post-exilic prophets. He returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel, and was used by God to stir up the people from their fear and indifference to resume work on the temple.
- Zechariah joined Haggai about 4 months later (Ezra. 5:1; 6:14), and finally the reconstruction of the temple was completed in 515 B.C.
- To angels, demons, and even some people, the rebuilding of the temple may have seemed like a “small thing”. It was only 90' high and 90' wide (Ezra 6:3). Such a small thing, however, should not be despised, for it was part of God’s eternal purpose. This “small thing” was part of God’s eternal strategy to achieve complete and total victory throughout the whole universe.

Obviously, the commandment to go forth and rebuild Jerusalem was not a small thing. This was the benchmark God gave to compute the exact time when Christ would come (Dan. 9:25). This “small thing” was used by God to bring the most powerful men on earth to help accomplish the task. Cyrus, the King of Persia, was the only gentile ever called God’s anointed (Isa. 45:1). He began the project of rebuilding the temple, and when he died, King Darius was used by God to continue the work (Ezra 6:1 ff.) Note that God also prompted Darius to return the gold and silver articles stolen from the temple (Ezra 6:5). Next, God had King Artaxerxes send Nehemiah with money, men, and letters of authority to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:1 - 10). Why should any godly person look down on, or despise any of these things?

Hebrews 11 contains a catalog of faithful men and women who have been promised eternal rewards. It seems that all of them were involved in “small things”. Abel “merely” made an offering, Enoch “only” walked with God, Noah built an ark but “only” saved his immediate family, Abraham “simply” looked for a city, Sarah “only” gave birth to a baby, Joseph “just” gave instructions about his bones, the parents of Moses “only” hid him for three months, the prostitute Rahab “merely” welcomed the spies, etc. Are any of these “small” things to be “despised”?

But what about you and me? Is the job we are doing for God “large” or “small”? It seems that anything God calls us to do is significant beyond human explanation. Please do not despise it! Remember! God transformed the widow’s mites into eternal honor and reward. Remember! God used a single convert by Philip to send the Gospel to Africa. Remember! A beggar named Lazarus without an earthly friend, was carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham to receive eternal honor and reward. Remember! “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.” (Luke 16:10)

Please do not despise the day of small things! **“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.” (Eccl 9:10)**