

Zechariah 4:1-14

How do you keep going, when there is little to show for your labors?

What if you are called to be part of the church in a day and place of small things?

Thesis

In Zechariah 4:1-14, we see the answer for Christians who live in day and place of small things, delivering them from relying upon their own strength and ingenuity for success as well as preserving them from despair.

1. Golden Lamp-stand vv. 1-6

Zechariah saw an arresting and beautiful vision - a golden lamp-stand (**Zech 4:2-3**). There were two olive trees, one on each side of the lamp-stand, The lampstand signifies 3 things: **First**, God's temple. **Secondly**, God's own presence. (**2 Sam. 22:29; Rev 21:23**). **Thirdly**, the people of God (**Isa. 42:6; Matt 5:14**).

The message of the vision lay in the spiritual realm (**Zech 4:6**). It is a motto to guide and inspire Zerubbabel and his fellow builders in all their labors and spiritual life. The point is in the contrast: it is not by might, not by power, but by God's Spirit.

This teaches us two things:

First, God is able to overcome all obstacles.

Secondly, we are exhorted to prayerful obedience and dependance upon God.

2. Day of Small Things vv. 6-10

The Israelites had returned to Jerusalem from Babylon by faith in God's word of hope for a new future (**Isa. 40:1-2; 51:11**) but it had not been experienced as yet. This situation is similar to that of Christians today. Zechariah's visions set before the eyes of faith, manifestations of what is real but yet unseen.

The message of God's mighty help teaches us:

First, although there are obstacles, God is sufficient to overcome them (**Zech. 4:7a**).

Secondly, God's power for us spurs us on to action (**Zech 4:7b**).

Thirdly, God's goal is the increased knowledge of Himself (**Zech. 4:9**).

The angel then comments with a statement of wisdom for the life of faith: "For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice" (**Zech. 4:10**).

This is also an exhortation to us to begin the work God has set before us.

We begin by trusting in the Lord and doing what is there before us to do, by not despising the day of small things (**Zech. 4:10**).

This principle is found at work in the life of Jesus.

When others see Zerubbabel going about the work in faith, they will rejoice and take heart themselves because of his "straight" example.

This reminds us that Zerubbabel does not stand for us, first of all, but for Jesus Christ, the builder of God's true temple.

3. Two Olive Trees vv. 11-14

The prophet stops the angel with a question about the two olive trees on either side of the lamp-stand (**Zech 4:11-12**).

These olive trees supplied the oil for the seven lamps, signifying the Spirit's sufficiency for God's work.

These two branches are the two subjects of these visions: Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the prince (**Zech 4:14**).

The priesthood and the kingship, as ordained by God, mediated God's Spirit just as the oil flowed through the channels into the lamp-stand.

When we turn to the ministry of Jesus Christ, these two offices come to their fullest realization. Jesus Christ is the true "Son of Oil." He is the Anointed One who truly mediates the Holy Spirit, through whom come blessing and power for salvation.

Christ's role is to reconcile us to God as priest, and to rule and conquer as king.

Our role is to receive these vast blessings through faith, as is well depicted by these empty pipes that connect into the olive trees, and receive from Christ the life-giving benefits of his saving work.

How do Christians exercise priesthood and kingship?

First, we do this in our fight against sin.

Secondly, we hold before the world the gospel of Christ's saving blood.

We also serve as Christ's royal officials in this world, extending his reign through works of righteousness and mercy and truth.

This is how Christians live in this world: having been reconciled by a priest and called into the service of a king, we are agents of Christ's twofold ministry in the power of the Spirit he sends.

May Jesus Christ, our high priest and king, send each of us his Spirit in abundance, to bring us to God and rule within us as we look to him in faith.