

## SHOULD WE DESPISE "THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS" IN CHURCH OR STATE?

God has ordained the "two olive trees", the "two anointed ones" of Biblical church and state, to carry on His work in this world, as we read in Zechariah 4. There, the high priest Joshua at the time represented the Biblical church and the civil ruler Zerubbabel represented the Biblical state. It has often been the case in this fallen world that Biblical ecclesiastical and civil efforts have been humble and modest, even as it was when the Jews were seeking in Zerubbabel's day to re-establish Jerusalem. Should we then despise humble efforts, if they be grounded in Biblical principle? Consider the words of Zechariah 4:10:

" For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth."

Commenting on this verse, Rev. Matthew Henry writes in his commentary:

“This shall effectually silence those that looked with contempt upon the beginning of this work, v. 10. Who, where, is he now that despised the day of small things, and thought this work would never come to anything? The Jews themselves despised the foundation of the second temple, because it was likely to be so far inferior to the first... Their enemies despised the wall when it was in the building... But let them not do it. Note, in God's work the day of small things is not to be despised. Though the instruments be weak and unlikely, God often chooses such, by them to bring about great things. As a great mountain becomes a plain before him when he pleases, so a little stone, cut out of a mountain without hands, comes to fill the earth, Daniel 2:35. Though the beginnings be small, God can make the latter end greatly to increase; a grain of mustard-seed may become a great tree. Let not the dawning light be despised, for it will shine more and more to the perfect day. The day of small things is the day of precious things, and will be the day of great things...

This shall abundantly satisfy all the hearty well-wishers to God's interest, who will be glad to see themselves mistaken in despising the day of small things. Those that despaired of the finishing of the work shall rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, when they see him busy among the builders, giving orders and directions what to do, and taking care that the work be done with great exactness, that it may be both fine and firm. Note, it is matter of great rejoicing to all good people to see magistrates careful and active for the edifying of the house of God, to see the plummet in the hand of those who have power to do much, if they have but a heart according to it; we see not Zerubbabel with the trowel in his hand (that is left to the workmen, the ministers), but we see him with the plummet in his hand, and it is no disparagement, but an honour to him. Magistrates are to inspect ministers' work, and to speak comfortably to the Levites that do their duty...

This shall highly magnify the wisdom and care of God's providence, which is always employed for the good of his church. Zerubbabel does his part, does as much as man can do to forward the work, but it is with those seven, those seven eyes of the Lord which we read of ch. 3:9. He could do nothing if the watchful, powerful, gracious providence of God did not go before him and go along with him in it. Except the Lord had built this house, Zerubbabel and the rest would have labored in vain, Ps. 127:1. These eyes of the Lord are those that run to and fro through the whole earth, that take cognizance of all the creatures and all their actions (2 Chr. 16:9), and inspire and direct all, according to the divine counsels. Note, We must not think that God is so taken up with the affairs of his church as to neglect the world; but it is a comfort to us that the same all-wise almighty Providence that governs the nations of the earth is in a particular manner conversant about the church..."

### Lesson for Today

Let us not then despise even humble efforts to establish Biblical church congregations and Biblical civil governments. We ought to do as God has commanded, and leave the results with this sovereign God.

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