

Small Beginnings

Scripture Reading — Haggai 2:1-9

*“Who despises the day of small things?”
Zechariah 4:10 —*

Ezra, Haggai, and Zechariah all describe the rebuilding of the temple after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon. A curious incident occurred at the dedication of the new temple. Generally, the people shouted for joy. But many of the older leaders, who remembered Solomon’s temple, wept aloud because the new temple was not as glorious. Shouts of joy and wailing mingled together in an unsettling way (Ezra 3:10-13).

In the midst of such confusion, God gave Haggai and Zechariah a beautiful prophecy. There at the ceremony stood Joshua, a high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor, who was in charge of construction. God indicated that these two were like symbols of Christ, who would offer the sacrifice that would purify us forever, and who would build the Lord’s church.

To those to whom the new temple seemed “like nothing,” Haggai said that the glory of the new temple would surpass that of Solomon’s temple. And to those who despised “the day of small things,” Zechariah said that the building of the new temple would be “not by might nor by power, but by [God’s] Spirit” (4:6).

That’s the way evangelism and missions always begin: small—when you talk to one person, and “where two or three” gather in Jesus’ name (Matthew 18:20). The Holy Spirit, who started the work, will complete it.

Prayer

We have many anxieties, Lord, about your church. Give us confidence to lean on the Holy Spirit, and to spread the message of salvation where you have placed us. Amen.

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