

Lesson Prayer:

We praise Thee, O God, for thy manifold mercies bestowed all around us and at all times. Only by Thy mercy and goodness can we live and have faith, hope and courage to go on to the end. Only by Thy mercy can we hope to attain eternal life and be counted just because our sins are freely pardoned. We praise Thee for Thy Gift, the Lord Jesus, who not only saves us but who is our Advocate, pleading the Father to give us a home eternal.

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COME TO CHURCH



Creamed Comments On S.S. Lesson Notes

In the Israelite's heart there was an inner urge to make first in their lives Jerusalem and the Temple as the one place where they could meet God and worship him. The loyal Jews were quick to accept Cyrus' offer to return from captivity. With plans to build homes for themselves there was a deep motive to rebuild the Temple which purpose was thwarted for a time by the Samaritan's interference. But in their discouragement God sent two prophets, Haggai who stressed the material side, the building of the temple, and Zechariah who stressed the spiritual side.

V. 8. "Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the house of the Lord and I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified saith the Lord." God's glory is seen in true worship as provided in the house of God. Here is where one loses sight of himself by being overwhelmed in true spiritual exaltation of God.

V. 9. "Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house which is waste, and ye run every man to his own house." God had shown his displeasure because of their lethargy in allowing his house to be uncompleted in blowing his harvests away as if they were chaff.

In the long run God's purposes are revealed by times of suffering. It is whatever state we may be, in our part to trust and obey God.

V. 14. "And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel of Sheathiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Josua, the son of Josech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they did come and work in the house of the Lord and hosts their God." There was needed the same breath of heaven which had first kindled the fire of divine zeal in their hearts to arouse the now smoldering embers into living flames again.

V. 1. "And when the seventh month was come and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Home life in the homeland was important.

V. 3. "And they set the altar up on his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries; and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening." The primary meaning of an altar is the place where God is met. Israel wisely resorted to God for help in this time of discouragement.

V. 10. "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, the Levites sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel." The best prayers are introduced with praise and thanksgiving to God. It is fitting that music be used in this expression. The program of praise is indicated in verse 11. The chief source of praise is the everlasting mercy of God. Such thoughts deepen one's devotions.

V. 7. "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel, thou shall become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shouting, crying, Grace unto it." Here are expressions of glad acclaim.

V. 8. "Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel hath laid the foundations of this house; his hands shall also finish it." Here is proof that a true prophet spoke.

V. 5. "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." This prophet, Zechariah, in contrast to the practical prophet, Haggai, stressed the source of the needed spiritual power generated by God through his Spirit. The material is a blessing only as a means for the expression of the spiritual life. A proper relationship of the material and spiritual must be made.

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