



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Teacher Vol. 52 No. 2

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and be careful as to their indifference and thoughtlessness. Take a review of all your ways, for you will have to give an account of your idleness.

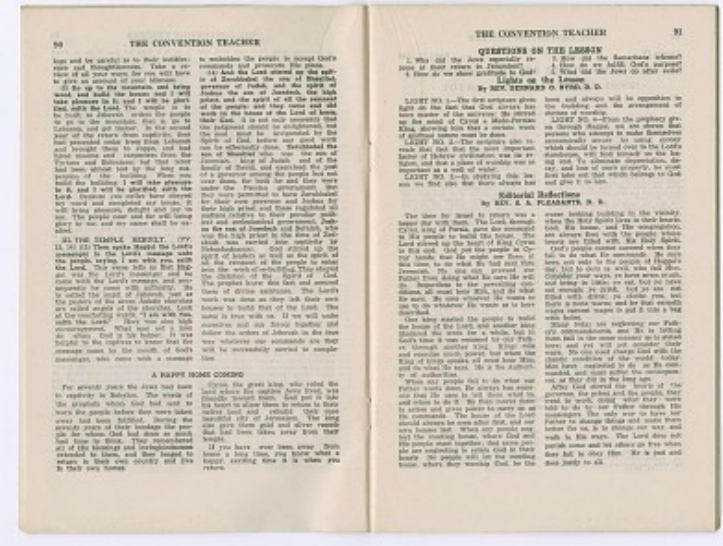
(8) Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. The temple is to be built, so Jehovah orders the people to go to the mountain, that is, go to Lebanon, and get timber. In the second year of the return from captivity, they had presented cedar trees from Lebanon and brought them to Joppa, and had hired masons and carpenters from the Tyrians and Sidonians; but that labor had been almost lost by the long suspension of the building. When you build the building; I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Because you exiles have obeyed my word and completed my house, it will bring pleasure, delight and joy to me. The people near and far will bring glory to me, and my name shall be exalted.

III. THE TEMPLE REBUILT. (VV. 13, 14) (13) Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the Lord. This verse tells us that Haggai was the Lord's messenger and he came with the Lord's message, and consequently he came with authority. He is called the angel of Jehovah, just as the pastors of the seven Asiatic churches. Look at the comforting words, "I am with You, saith the Lord." Here was also high encouragement. What may not a man do when God is his helper. It was helpful to the captives to know that the message came by mouth of God's messenger, who came with a message to embolden the people to accept God's commands and prosecute His plans.

(14) And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God. It is not only necessary that the judgment should be enlightened, but the soul must be invigorated by the Spirit of God, before any good work can be effectually done. Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel who was the son of Jeconiah, king of Judah and of the family of David, and exercised the post of a governor among the people but not over them, for both he and they were under the Persian government. But they were permitted to have Zerubbabel for their own governor and Joshua for their high priest and these regulated all matters relative to their peculiar political and ecclesiastical government. Joshua the son of Josedech and Seraiah, who was the high priest in the time of Zedekiah was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. God stirred up the spirit of leaders as well as the spirit of all the people to enter into the work of re-building. They obeyed the dictation of the Spirit of God. The prophet knew this fact and assured them of divine assistance. The Lord's work was done as they left their own houses to build that of the Lord. The same is true with us. If we will unite ourselves and our forces together and follow the orders of Jehovah in the true way whatever our commands are they will be successfully carried to completion.

A HAPPY HOMECOMING

For seventy years the Jews had been in captivity in Babylon. The words of the prophets whom God had sent to warn the people before they



were taken away had been fulfilled. During the seventy years of their bondage the people for whom God had done so much had time to think. They remembered all of His blessings and lovingkindness extended to them, and they longed to return to their own country and live in their own homes.

Cyrus, the great king, who ruled the land where the captive Jews lived, was friendly toward them. God put it into his heart to allow them to return to their native land and rebuild their once beautiful city of Jerusalem. The king also gave them gold and silver vessels that had been taken away from their temple.

If you have ever been away from home a long time, you know what a happy, exciting time it is when you return.

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THE CONVENTION TEACHER 91

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

1. Why did the Jews especially rejoice at their return to Jerusalem?
2. How do we show gratitude to God?
3. How did Samaritans scheme?
4. How do we fulfill God's purpose?
5. What did the Jews do after exile?

Lights on the Lesson
By. REV. BERNARD O. BYRD, D.D.

LIGHT NO. 1 - The first scripture gives light on the fact that God always has been master of the universe: He stirred up the mind of Cyrus a Medo-Persian King, showing him that a certain work of spiritual nature must be done.

LIGHT NO. 2 - The scripture also reveals that fact that the most important factor of Hebrew civilization was its religion, and that a place of worship was as important as a well of water.

LIGHT NO. 3 - In studying this lesson we find also that there always has been and always will be opposition to the building and the arrangement of shrines of worship.

LIGHT NO. 4 - From the prophecy given through Haggai, we are shown that persons who attempt to make themselves economically secure by using money which should be turned over to the Lord's storehouse, will find himself on the losing end. To eliminate depreciation, decay, and loss of one's property, he must first take out that which belongs to God and give it to him.

Editorial Reflections
By REV. S.A PLEASANTSA, D.D.

The time for Israel to return was a happy day with them. The Lord,

through Cyrus, king of Persia, gave the command to His people to build His house. The Lord stirred up the heart of King Cyrus to this end. God put the people in Cyrus' hands, that He might use them at this time, to do what He had said thru Jeremiah. No one can prevent our Father from doing what He says He will do. Regardless to the prevailing conditions, all must hear Him, and do what He says. He uses whoever He wants to use to do whatever He wants as is here described.

One king started the people to build the house of the Lord, and another king hindered the work for a while, but in God's time it was resumed by our Father, through another king. Kings rule and exercise much power, but when the King of kings speaks, all must hear Him, and do what He says. He is the Authority of authorities.

When any people fail to do what our Father wants done, He always has someone that He uses to tell them what to do, and when to do it. He then moves them to action and gives power to carry on as He commands. The house of the Lord should always be seen after first, and our own houses last. When any people neglect the meeting house, where God and His people meet together; that same people are neglecting to retain God in their hearts. No people will let the meeting house, where they worship God, be the worse looking building in the vicinity, when the Holy Spirit lives in their hearts, God, His house, and His congregation, are always first with the people whose hearts are filled with His Holy Spirit.

God's people cannot succeed when they fail to do what he commands. He says here, not only to the people of Haggai's day, but to ours as well, who fail Him, Consider your ways, ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earnest wages to put it into a bag with holes.

Many today are neglecting our Father's commandments, and He is letting them fail in the same manner as is stated here; and yet will not consider their ways. No one need charge God with the chaotic condition of the world today. Men have neglected to do as He commanded, and must suffer the consequences, as they did in the long ago.

After God stirred the hearts of the governor, the priest and the people, they went to work, doing what they were told to do by our Father through His messengers. The only way to have our Father to change things and make them better for us, is to change our way, and walk in His ways. The Lord does not punish some and let others go free when they fail to obey Him. He is just and does justly to all.

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