

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“Fresh Oil for An Unfinished Work”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Zech. 4:1-14; Zech. 4:1-9; Ex. 27:20-21; Lev. 24:2-4; Hag. 2:3; 2 Chr. 16:9; Ps. 127:1; Matt. 5:14; Rev. 1:20

There is a particular kind of discouragement that comes from standing in front of something that remains unfinished. You know that the LORD called you to do a work, and you may have already laid the foundation, but the completed work still seems far away. Instead of seeing progress, you see everything that remains undone. Instead of being encouraged by the beginning, you compare it with other completed works – maybe with something what once was, what someone else has built, or what you thought it would look like by now.

That was the atmosphere surrounding the rebuilding of the Temple. The foundation had been laid, but the work had stalled. Some remembered the glory of the former Temple and looked upon the present work as though it were nothing. Yet Zechariah's vision reveals that ADONAI was not discouraged by the unfinished condition of the House. His eyes were upon the work, He rejoiced when He saw Zerubbabel return to the assignment, and He had already provided a continual supply of fresh oil to keep the light burning.

1. DO NOT DESPISE AN UNFINISHED WORK

ADONAI asks, *“For who despises the day of small things?”* (Zech. 4:10). The people were looking at something that appeared small, incomplete, and unimpressive. Haggai described the same attitude when he asked, *“Who remains among you who saw this House in its former glory? So how do you see it now? Does it not seem as nothing in comparison in your eyes?”* (Hag. 2:3). Their memories of what had once been made it difficult for them to recognize the importance of what ADONAI was doing in their own day.

We must be careful not to confuse unfinished with insignificant. A foundation is not the whole building, but without it there can be no building. The beginning may look small because we are seeing only the first stage of something God intends to complete. The work in your life, family, congregation, or calling may not yet resemble what you believe ADONAI promised, but that does not mean He has abandoned it. Do not despise what God is still building simply because it has not yet reached its finished form.

2. KEEP THE PLUMB LINE IN YOUR HAND

The verse continues, *“These seven—which are the eyes of ADONAI that run back and forth throughout the whole earth—will rejoice when they see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand”* (Zech. 4:10). The seven point us back to the lamps in the vision and to the fullness of ADONAI's sight. His eyes range throughout the whole earth. He saw the opposition, the

limited resources, the years of delay, the disappointment of the people, and everything that stood before Zerubbabel. Nothing about the unfinished work was hidden from Him.

What caused heaven to rejoice was not the sight of a yet-to-be-completed Temple. The eyes of ADONAI rejoiced when they saw the measuring tool in Zerubbabel's hand. He had returned to the assignment. He was once again standing where God had placed him, holding what was needed for the next act of obedience. You may not be able to finish everything today, but you can keep the plumb line in your hand. You can pray again, serve again, build again, and take the next faithful step. Others may focus on what remains unfinished, but ADONAI sees the obedience that has returned to your hand.

3. STAY NEAR THE SOURCE OF FRESH OIL

Zechariah then asks about the two olive trees and the two olive branches beside the menorah. He sees what appears to be an abundant supply of golden oil flowing from the olives toward the lampstand. The imagery is difficult, and Zechariah himself repeatedly asks for understanding. Finally, the angel explains, *"These are the two anointed ones, who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth"* (Zech. 4:14). More literally, they are the two "sons of fresh oil" who stand beside the Lord of all the earth.

The passage does not identify these two figures with pristine clarity. They may reflect Joshua and Zerubbabel—the priestly and governing leaders through whom ADONAI was restoring the Temple and the community. But the central picture is clear: the oil that sustains the light comes from those who stand near the Lord of the whole earth. The light was not being maintained through exhausting human effort. ADONAI had provided a continual supply. An unfinished work does not merely require more determination; it requires fresh oil. We must remain near His presence, because yesterday's strength cannot sustain today's calling. The light continues to burn only through the fresh supply of the Ruach of ADONAI.

CONCLUSION

Zechariah 4 does not promise that the work will always appear impressive while it is being built. It does not say that every symbol will immediately be understood or that every obstacle will disappear at once. It shows us something deeper: ADONAI sees the unfinished work differently than we do. He does not despise the small beginning. He rejoices over faithful obedience, and He has not left His people to keep the light burning through their own strength.

Perhaps you are tired because you have been trying to finish through human effort what can only be sustained by the Spirit of the LORD. Bring that weariness to Yeshua. Bring the comparisons, the disappointment, and the fear that the work will never become what God promised. Ask Him to place the plumb line back into your hand and fresh oil within your spirit. You do not need to pretend the work is finished. You only need to remain faithful in the unfinished place, standing near the Lord of the whole earth and receiving the supply that comes from Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why were some of the returned exiles tempted to despise the rebuilding of the Temple?
2. What is the difference between an unfinished work and an insignificant work?
3. Why is it meaningful that the eyes of ADONAI rejoiced over the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand before the Temple was completed?
4. What unfinished area of your life have you been tempted to judge only by what is still missing?
5. Where might you be trying to sustain God's work through determination and effort rather than through fresh oil from His *Ruach*?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, forgive us for the times we have despised what You are building because it appeared small or unfinished. Deliver us from comparison, discouragement, and the pressure to make the work look complete before its time. Help us trust that every foundation laid in obedience matters to You.

Place the plumb line back into our hands and give us grace to take the next faithful step. Draw us near to You, the Lord of the whole earth, and fill us with fresh oil from Your *Ruach*. Sustain the light You have entrusted to us, and complete the work You have begun for the glory of Your name.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.