



**SPRING-TIME DAILY
ENCOURAGEMENTS**

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

June 7, 2023

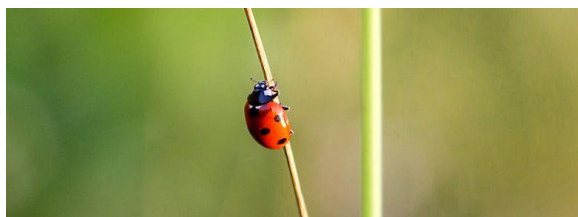


Photo: Our Daily Bread

SMALL BUT GREAT

Who dares despise the day of small things?

Zechariah 4:10

READ Zechariah 4:4 - 10

Will I make the Olympics? The college swimmer worried her speed was too slow. But when math professor Ken Ono studied her swim techniques, he saw how to improve her time by six full seconds—a substantial difference at that level of competition. Attaching sensors to the swimmer's back, he didn't identify major changes to improve her time. Instead, Ono identified tiny corrective actions that, if applied, could make the swimmer more efficient in the water, making the winning difference.

Small corrective actions in spiritual matters can make a big difference for us too. The prophet Zechariah taught a similar principle to a remnant of discouraged Jews struggling, along with their builder Zerubbabel, to rebuild God's temple after their exile. But "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," the Lord Almighty told Zerubbabel (Zechariah 4:6).

As Zechariah declared, "Who dares despise the day of small things?" (v. 10). The exiles had worried that the temple wouldn't match the one built during King Solomon's reign. But just as Ono's swimmer made the Olympics—winning a medal after surrendering to small corrections—Zerubbabel's band of builders learned that even a small, right effort made with God's help can bring victorious joy if our small acts glorify Him. In Him, small becomes great.

By Patricia Raybon

PRAY & REFLECT

Point me to small, good actions, dear God, that make a big difference in me for You. Amen

Where have big, splashy actions led you to spiritual frustration? What small changes have enhanced your spiritual life?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The Old Testament records more than thirty men named Zechariah, a name that means "the Lord remembers." However, none is more prominent than the prophet Zechariah who wrote the book that bears his name. Zechariah is the longest of the twelve prophetic books from Hosea to Malachi and is thus classified among the Minor Prophets because it's relatively shorter than other prophetic books, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (Major Prophets). Zechariah was a postexilic prophet; his ministry took place after the Babylonian exile (after 538 BC). Information within the book helps to determine the time of his service. Zechariah 1:1 and 1:7 mention Zechariah receiving a message from God in the second year of Darius. Zechariah 7:1 mentions "the fourth year of King Darius," who was the Persian king from 522 to 486 BC. – By **Arthur Jackson**

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