

tain? Did it mean Persia, the apostate Jew, the Samaritan, or all combined? These would disappear as Zerubbabel went forward. The copestone would be laid with rejoicing. Verse 7 expresses this in plain language. Evidently Zerubbabel has been despised by the people, and this would inspire confidence.

Having grasped the central truth, place it in relation to present conditions. To the Jews it meant, that, with limited resources, by God's help they could build the temple. To us it means, that the Holy Spirit is necessary to build up character for God. The symbol of light is common in scripture (compare Matt. 5: 14-16; John 8: 12).

Teach two lessons:

(1) The source of power is God's Spirit. This does not do away with human power, but directs and perfects it. History supplies many illustrations where obstacles have been swept away by revivals of spiritual power.

(2) The necessity of human co-operation. Man must be in spiritual communion with God (compare John, ch. 15). Apply this to the life and work of the church now confronting many problems. We need more God-directing influence. True success is not based upon material things, but on spiritual principle. Emphasize the truth that every life needs this power, and can have it.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Turn to Matt. 5: 14, and have the class read the first sentence of the verse. It is Christ's own saying of His followers. It was a bright day for the world when they began to be; and dark would the world be to-day and all the days without them. The scholars will accept the fact; and will feel, too, the responsibility.

But there is a deeper question. How is the light enkindled, and how kept up? The Lesson to-day helps to the understanding of this, especially to the understanding of how that divinely kindled light is sustained.

It was a Lesson partly to the eye and partly to the ear, and altogether to the spirit within.

The "angel" of v. 1, is already a tried teacher. Four lessons (the four preceding visions) he had already given—wonderful things shown and explained. No wonder the astonished and enraptured prophet felt the

need of "recess"; and no wonder he fell asleep (see Luke 9: 32). Poor human nature can only take in so much before becoming exhausted.

"Waked me"; for there was still more to be seen and heard. When God takes in hand to teach a man, He will not cease until the whole lesson has been given.

"What seest thou?" And what did he see? It would be difficult to make a picture of it with pen or pencil. Beyond the seven-branched candlestick, or lamp-stand, with whose shape and appearance we are familiar, and which is readily drawn, it is best not to try. But drill the scholars thoroughly in the items of what the prophet saw.

"A candlestick"; or lamp-stand such as was in the Tabernacle and the temple. Does it mean the church as a light-giver, giving forth to the world God's light of holiness, love, mercy, and helpfulness? "All of gold"—the most precious metal, indestructible: a fit image for God's church, which is the highest and most glorious of earthly societies, and the only one which will outlive all change and is eternal.

The "bowl" is for the oil to feed the "lamps"; the lamps are "seven," the perfect number. Do the lamps stand for God's servants, who make up the church? And is not the oil from the "olive trees" the blessed Holy Spirit of God, the source of the light—its beginning and its continuance. Who are the "two olive trees"? The prophet presses the question, vs. 11, 12. The answer is in v. 14—Jeshua, God's priest to atone, Zerubbabel God's minister to instruct and guide. Through these the knowledge and the Spirit of God came to the people. And do not these two unite in Christ Jesus, our priest and prophet, in whom the Spirit dwells and through whom He descends upon God's children.

It is all a little dazzling and puzzling? So it was to the prophet; and so is the sun in the heavens, when you try to gaze with open eye into his burning face. But a little bit is revealed, vs. 6, 7. Have the class read these verses, and bring out by questions who Zerubbabel was, and why he needed encouragement. How would the great message of v. 6 encourage him? What may we learn from it when fighting the Lord's battles against foes within