

# BUILDING THE HOUSE OF GOD

## 1. SYNOPSIS OF BOOK OF EZRA.

### 1. *Account of the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon.*

1. Had been in captivity for 70 years; had failed to keep the Sabbath for 490 years.
2. Apparently all Israelites were not taken captive.
  1. Possibly leaders and choicest of the people.
  2. Still subjects which remained behind still loyal to Babylon.

### 2. *Rebuilding of the temple-- work of restoration.*

### 3. *Spiritual message: the power of the Word of God in human life.*

## 2. THE ROAD TO RESTORATION.

### 1. *That the word of the Lord might be fulfilled.* (Ezra 1:1 KJV) Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

1. Charge to build house. (Ezra 1:2 KJV) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
2. Who is there among you?
  1. (Ezra 1:3 KJV) Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.
  2. Time to stand up and be counted with the chosen of the Lord.
3. Those who remain. (Ezra 1:4 KJV) And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.
  1. Those whose spirit God had raised rose up to build.
  2. Those who remained were to strengthen their hands.

### 2. *King Cyrus returned the vessels of the house of the Lord.*

1. Nebuchadnezzar had no respect for the things of the temple.
2. Vessels had been resting the house of false gods.

## 3. REBUILDING THE ALTARS OF THE LORD.

### 1. *Began to offer sacrifices again.* (Ezra 3:2 KJV) Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

1. (Ezra 3:5 KJV) And afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the LORD.
2. Foundation not yet laid. (Ezra 3:6 KJV) From the first day of the seventh

month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid.

2. ***When the foundation was laid, everyone took their place.*** (Ezra 3:10 KJV) And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel.
  1. The people sang praises and thanksgiving to the Lord. (Ezra 3:11 KJV) And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.
  2. People shouted with great shout because foundation laid.
  3. Ancient men who saw the first house wept.
3. ***But this was not to be the final shout of victory, because there was still opposition.***
4. BUT THERE WAS OPPOSITION.
  1. ***Adversaries came: ALet us build with you. We seek your God as you do.@***
    1. These adversaries had no doubt become comfortable in their role of loyalty to the King of Babylon while remaining in the land.
    2. Must be discerning; not everyone who wants to be a part of you is for you.
    3. Some want their own agenda but are not willing to pay for it. If they can't fulfill their agenda, they will turn against you.
  2. ***Opposition.***
    1. Represented by those who had forgotten God.
    2. You can't trust a cold, carnal Christian in a backslidden condition who is still trying to prove to you that they have the same desire and goal as you.
    3. You don't get opposition from people who have the same vision, are on fire for God, and are praying for and supporting the work of God.
  3. ***Zerubbabel's reply: AYou have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God.@***
  4. ***Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people and troubled them in building.***
    1. Satan will first seek to infiltrate the army of the Lord to work from within.
    2. The second wave is that of discouragement.
    3. Will send those to frustrate your purpose.
  5. ***The work of the Lord ceased.*** (Ezra 4:24 KJV) Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.
  6. ***But that is not the end of the story.***
5. RENEWING OF THE VISION.
  1. ***God raised up Haggai and Zechariah who began to prophesy.***
  2. God will speak in our time of greatest need. He'll raise up a prophetic voice.

1. (Hag 1:1 KJV) In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying, (Hag 1:2 KJV) Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.
  2. (Hag 1:3 KJV) Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, (Hag 1:4 KJV) Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? (Hag 1:5 KJV) Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. (Hag 1:6 KJV) Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.
  3. (Hag 1:7 KJV) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. (Hag 1:8 KJV) 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.
  4. (Hag 1:9 KJV) 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 that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. (Hag 1:10 KJV) Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. (Hag 1:11 KJV) And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.
  5. (Hag 1:13 KJV) Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD.
  6. (Hag 1:14 KJV) 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, (Hag 1:15 KJV) In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.
3. ***Zerubbabel and Joshua obey.*** (Hag 1:12 KJV) Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD.
  4. ***Zerubbabel and Joshua began building with help of the prophets.*** (Ezra 5:2 KJV) Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.
    1. (Hag 2:1 KJV) In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai, saying, (Hag 2:2

KJV) Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, (Hag 2:3 KJV) Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? (Hag 2:4 KJV) Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: (Hag 2:5 KJV) According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. (Hag 2:6 KJV) For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; (Hag 2:7 KJV) And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. (Hag 2:8 KJV) The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. (Hag 2:9 KJV) The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

2. (Hag 2:21 KJV) Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; (Hag 2:22 KJV) And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.
3. (Zec 4:6 KJV) 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.
4. (Zec 4:8 KJV) Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (Zec 4:9 KJV) The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. (Zec 4:10 KJV) For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

## 6. AUTHORITY TO BUILD AGAIN QUESTIONED.

1. ***Satan will not give up easily.***
2. ***Research into the records.***
  1. Decree to build. (Ezra 6:3 KJV) In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits;
  2. King offers his resources. (Ezra 6:8 KJV) Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God:

that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. (Ezra 6:9 KJV)

And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail:

3. Whoever hinders should be hanged. (Ezra 6:11 KJV) Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this.
3. ***Elders of Jews prospered through the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah.*** (Ezra 6:14 KJV) And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.
  1. House built and finished.
  2. Proper worship reinstated as sacrifices offered on appointed days according to the Word of God.
4. ***Priests and Levites were purified together to offer acceptable sacrifices.***
5. ***Some still had not separated themselves; Ezra's call to repentance.***