

The Foundation of the Second Temple Is Laid (May 536 BC)

Ezra 3:8–13

8 Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began *the work* and appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to oversee the work of the house of the LORD.

9 Then Jeshua *with* his sons and brothers stood united *with* Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah *and* the sons of Henadad *with* their sons and brothers the Levites, to oversee the workmen in the temple of God.

10 Now when the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD according to the directions of King David of Israel.

11 They sang, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, *saying*, “For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever.” 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.

12 Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers’ *households*, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy,

13 so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away.

Restore Us, O LORD (c. May 536 BC)

Psalm 126

A Song of Ascents.

- 1 When the LORD brought back the captive ones of Zion,
We were like those who dream.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter
And our tongue with joyful shouting;
Then they said among the nations,
“The LORD has done great things for them.”
- 3 The LORD has done great things for us;
We are glad.
- 4 Restore our captivity, O LORD,
As the streams in the South.
- 5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting.
- 6 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying *his* bag of seed,
Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

Temple Construction Halted by Local Enemies (536–520 BC)

Ezra 4:1–5, 24

1 Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the LORD God of Israel,

2 they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers’ *households*, and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

3 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers’ *households* of Israel said to them, “You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God; but we ourselves will together build to the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us.”

4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building,
 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.
 24 Then work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased, and it was stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Our Eyes Look to the LORD Our God (c. May 536 BC)

Psalm 123

A Song of Ascents.

- 1 To You I lift up my eyes,
 O You who are enthroned in the heavens!
- 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* to the hand of their master,
 As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
 So our eyes *look* to the LORD our God,
 Until He is gracious to us.
- 3 Be gracious to us, O LORD, be gracious to us,
 For we are greatly filled with contempt.
- 4 Our soul is greatly filled
 With the scoffing of those who are at ease,
And with the contempt of the proud.

They Have Afflicted Me from My Youth (c. May 536 BC)

Psalm 129

A Song of Ascents.

- 1 “Many times they have persecuted me from my youth up,”
 Let Israel now say,
- 2 “Many times they have persecuted me from my youth up;
 Yet they have not prevailed against me.
- 3 “The plowers plowed upon my back;
 They lengthened their furrows.”
- 4 The LORD is righteous;
 He has cut in two the cords of the wicked.
- 5 May all who hate Zion
 Be put to shame and turned backward;
- 6 Let them be like grass upon the housetops,
 Which withers before it grows up;
- 7 With which the reaper does not fill his hand,
 Or the binder of sheaves his bosom;
- 8 Nor do those who pass by say,
 “The blessing of the LORD be upon you;
 We bless you in the name of the LORD.”

Temple Construction Restarted Through the Preaching of Haggai and Zechariah (520 BC)

Ezra 5:1

1 When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them,

Haggai's Prophecy—Living Large While God's House Lies in Ruins (August 29, 520 BC)

Haggai 1:1–13

1 In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

2 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘This people says, “The time has not come, *even* the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.”’”

3 Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying,

4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house *lies* desolate?”

5 Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!

6 You have sown much, but harvest little; *you* eat, but *there is* not *enough* to be satisfied; *you* drink, but *there is* not *enough* to become drunk; *you* put on clothing, but no one is warm *enough*; and he who earns, earns wages *to put* into a purse with holes.”

7 Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!

8 Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the LORD.

9 “*You* look for much, but behold, *it comes* to little; when you bring *it* home, I blow it *away*. Why?” declares the LORD of hosts, “Because of My house which *lies* desolate, while each of you runs to his own house.

10 Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce.

11 I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands.”

12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, 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 showed reverence for the LORD.

13 Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke by the commission of the LORD to the people saying, “‘I am with you,’ declares the LORD.”

Work Begins Again on the Temple (September 21, 520 BC)

Haggai 1:14–15

14 So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king.

Ezra 5:2

2 then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them supporting them.