

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

Ezra 3:8–13

8 In the second year after their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jehozadak began *their work*, and the remainder of their brothers the priests and the Levites and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem. They appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to direct the work of the house of Yahweh.

9 And Jeshua *with* his sons and brothers, and Kadmiel and his sons—the sons of Judah—together directed the workers in the house of God, *along with* the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers the Levites.

10 And the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Yahweh, and the priests *in their* apparel with the trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with the cymbals, were positioned to praise Yahweh, as described by King David of Israel.

11 And they sang responsively, with praising and thanksgiving to Yahweh *saying*, “For he is good, for his loyal love is everlasting for Israel.” And all of the people responded with a great shout of joyful acclaim in praise to Yahweh because the house of Yahweh was laid.

12 But many of the elderly priests, Levites, and heads of the families who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house, but many shouted aloud with joy.

13 No person could distinguish the sound of joyful acclaim from the sound of people weeping, for the people shouted with great joyful acclaim and the sound was heard from afar.

### Restore Us, O Lord (c. May 536 BC)

Psalms 126

#### A song of ascents.

- 1 When Yahweh restored the fortunes of Zion,  
we were like dreamers.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with rejoicing.  
Then they said among the nations,  
“Yahweh has done great *things* for these *people*.”
- 3 Yahweh has done great *things* for us;  
we are glad.
- 4 Restore, O Yahweh, our fortunes  
like the streams in the Negeb.
- 5 Those who sow with tears  
shall reap with rejoicing.
- 6 He who diligently goes *out* with weeping,  
carrying the seed bag,  
shall certainly come *in* with rejoicing,  
carrying his sheaves.

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

Ezra 4:1–5, 24

1 Now the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles *were* building a temple for Yahweh the God of Israel.

2 And they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of the families, and they said to them, “Let us build with you. Like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing *to him* from the days of Esarhaddon the king of Assyria who brought us up here.

3 But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel said to them, “*It is* not for you but for us to build a house for our God. For we ourselves alone will build *it* for Yahweh the God of Israel, just as Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us.”

4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build

5 and bribed officials against them to frustrate their plan for all the days of Cyrus king of Persia until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

24 Then the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped, and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

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

Ezra 5:1

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

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

Haggai 1:1–13

1 In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on *the* first day, the word of Yahweh came through Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,  
 2 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘This people says, “The time has not come to rebuild the temple of Yahweh.”’  
 3 And the word of Yahweh came through Haggai the prophet, saying,  
 4 “*Is it* a time for you yourselves to dwell in your houses that have been paneled *while* this house *is* desolate?”  
 5 And so then, thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Consider your ways!  
 6 You have sown much but have harvested little. You have eaten without *being* satisfied; you have drunk without being satiated; you have worn clothes without *being* warm; the one who earns wages puts it in a pouch with holes.’  
 7 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Consider your ways!  
 8 Go up the mountain and bring wood and build the house so that I may be pleased with it and honored,’ says Yahweh.  
 9 ‘You have looked for much, and look! *It came* to little; and *when* you brought *it* home, I blew it *away*. Why?’ declares Yahweh of hosts. ‘Because my house *is* desolate and you *are* running each to your own house!  
 10 Therefore, because of you *the* heavens have withheld *the* dew and the earth has withheld its produce.  
 11 I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and wild animals, and on all their labor.’”  
 12 Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all the remnant of the people gave heed to the voice of Yahweh their God and to the words of Haggai the prophet, as Yahweh their God had sent him, and the people feared Yahweh.  
 13 And Haggai the messenger of Yahweh spoke to the people with the message of Yahweh, saying, “ ‘*I am* with you’ declares Yahweh.”

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

Haggai 1:14–15

Ezra 5:2

14 And Yahweh stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and did *the* work on the house of Yahweh of hosts, their God,  
 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of King Darius.

2 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak set out and began to build the house of God that is in Jerusalem.  
 And with them the prophets of God *were* helping them.

## Tattenai Questions the Remnant's Authority to Rebuild the Temple (c. October 520 BC)

Ezra 5:3–17

3 At the same time Tattenai, governor of *the province* Beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai, and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus: “Who issued you all a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?”  
 4 Then we asked them this: “What are the names of the men who are building this building?”  
 5 And the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report came to Darius, and then *answer* was received.  
 6 The copy of the letter that Tattenai, the governor of *the province* Beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in *the province* Beyond the River sent to Darius the king.  
 7 They sent to him the report in which was written as follows: “To Darius the king, all peace.  
 8 May it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, the house of the great God. It is being built with stone blocks and timber is being put in the walls. This work is being done with diligence and is making progress in their hands.  
 9 Then we asked those elders and said this to them, ‘Who issued forth to you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?’  
 10 We also asked them their names to make them known to you, that we might write down the name of their leaders.

11 And this is the answer they returned to us: ‘We are servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are building the house that was built formerly many years ago, *which* a great king of Israel had built and finished.

12 But because our ancestors angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of the Chaldean King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia.

13 But in the first year of King Cyrus of Babylon’s reign he issued forth a decree to build this house of God.

14 Also, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took away from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to the temple in Babylonia, King Cyrus removed them from the temple in Babylonia and they were given to Sheshbazzar, whom he appointed governor.

15 He said to him, ‘Take these vessels. Go put them in the temple in Jerusalem and let the house of God be built on its site.’

16 Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation of the house of God in Jerusalem. And from that *time* until now it is being built, but not yet finished.’

17 And now, if it seems good for the king, let it be investigated in the house of the treasury of the king in Babylonia *to see* if a decree was issued forth from King Cyrus to build this house of God in Jerusalem. And let the king send to us his desire on this matter.”

### Haggai’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Don’t Be Discouraged (October 17, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:1–9

1 In the seventh *month* on the twenty-first day, the word of Yahweh came through Haggai the prophet, saying,

2 “Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

3 ‘Who among you *is* left that saw this house in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it seem like nothing to you?

4 ‘But now take courage, Zerubbabel,’ declares Yahweh. ‘Take courage, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and take courage, all the people of the land,’ declares Yahweh. ‘Do the work, because I *am* with you,’ declares Yahweh of hosts,

5 ‘according to the promise that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit is with you; do not be afraid.’

6 For thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and dry land. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

7 I will shake all the nations so that the treasure of all the nations will come, and I will fill this house *with* glory,’ says Yahweh of hosts.

8 ‘The silver *is* mine and the gold *is* mine,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.

9 ‘The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says Yahweh of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace’ declares Yahweh of hosts.”

### Zechariah’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Don’t Be Like Your Ancestors (c. October 27, 520 BC)

Zechariah 1:1–6

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, son of Iddo, saying,

2 “Yahweh was very angry with your ancestors.

3 You must say to them: ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Return to me,” declares Yahweh of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says Yahweh of hosts.

4 “Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Return from your evil ways and your evil deeds!” ‘ But they did not hear and they did not pay attention to me,” declares Yahweh.

5 “Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

6 However, did not my words and my regulations which I commanded my servants the prophets overtake your ancestors? And they repented and said, ‘Yahweh of hosts planned to do with us according to our ways, and according to our deeds so he has dealt with us.’”

### Haggai’s Prophecy to the Remnant—Sin’s Corrupting Influence (December 18, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:10–19

10 On *the* twenty-fourth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Haggai, saying,

11 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Ask now the priests *for* a ruling:

12 If a man carries consecrated meat in the hem of his garment, and his hem touches bread, or stew, or wine, or olive oil, or any kind of food, will it become holy?’” The priests answered, “No.”

13 Then Haggai said, “If one who is unclean from contact with a corpse touches any of these, will it become unclean?” The priests answered, “Yes, it will become unclean.”

14 And Haggai answered and said, “ ‘So *it is with* this people, and *with* this nation before me,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and so *it is with* every kind of work of their hands; and what they offer there *is* unclean.  
 15 But now, please consider from this day forward, before one stone was placed on another in the temple of Yahweh,  
 16 from that time when one came to a heap of twenty *measures*, there were *only* ten, and *when* one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures, there were *only* twenty.  
 17 I struck you with blight, and with plant mildew, and hail, all the work of your hands. But you did not come back to me,’ declares Yahweh.  
 18 ‘Please consider from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth *month*, from the day that the foundation of Yahweh’s temple was laid, consider:  
 19 *Is there* still seed in the store chamber? Do the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still produce nothing? From this day *forward* I will bless you.’”

### Haggai’s Prophecy to Zerubbabel—A Message of Encouragement (December 18, 520 BC)

Haggai 2:20–23

20 And the word of Yahweh came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth *day* of the month saying,  
 21 “Say to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah: I *am* going to shake the heavens and the earth, [[Heb 12:26](#)]  
 22 and I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the military strength of the kingdoms of the nations. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, every one by the sword of another!  
 23 ‘On that day,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and I will make you a signet ring, for I have chosen you,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.”

### Darius Sends His Approval for the Temple to be Rebuilt (c. January 519 BC)

Ezra 6:1–14a

#### Discovery of Cyrus’ Edict

1 Then King Darius issued forth a decree, and they searched the house of the treasury of scrolls being stored in Babylonia.  
 2 But it was in Ecbatana in the province of Media, in the citadel, that a certain scroll had written on it, “A record.  
 3 In the first year of King Cyrus, he issued forth a decree concerning the house of God in Jerusalem. Let the house be built, the place where sacrifices are offered and let its foundations be raised. Its height *shall be* sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits,  
 4 with three layers of great stones and a layer of timber. Let the new expenses be paid from the house of the king.  
 5 Also, let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylonia, be returned and brought to the temple in Jerusalem to its place. Put them in the house of God.”

#### Darius’ Order to Tattenai

6 “Now then, Tattenai governor of *the province* Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and your associates, the envoys who are in *the province* Beyond the River—keep far away from there.  
 7 Leave this work of the house of God alone. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site.  
 8 And I issue forth a decree for what you should do for these elders of the Jews to build this house of God. The full expense will be paid to these men from the riches of the king from the taxes of *the province* Beyond the River, without delay.  
 9 Whatever may be needed—young bulls, young rams, sheep for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil for the priests in Jerusalem—let it be given to them day by day with no negligence,  
 10 that they may offer incense offerings to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children.  
 11 Furthermore, I issue forth a decree that if any person violates this decree, let a beam be pulled out from his house and let him be impaled on it. And let his house be made a pile of rubble on *account of* this.  
 12 May the God who has set his name there overthrow any king or people who sets his hand to alter *or* to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, issue forth a decree. Let it be done with diligence.”

#### Tattenai Immediately Obeys

13 Then Tattenai the governor of the *province* Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates consequently did with diligence what Darius the king ordered.  
 14a So the elders of the Jews were building and prospering, through the prophecy of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Iddo.