

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.

Temple Construction Restarted Through 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 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 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.

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

Ezra 5:3–17

3 At that time Tattenai, the governor of *the province* beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them and spoke to them thus, “Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?”

4 Then we told them accordingly what the names of the men were who were reconstructing this building.

5 But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report could come to Darius, and then a written reply be returned concerning it.

6 *This is* the copy of the letter which Tattenai, the governor of *the province* beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues the officials, who were beyond the River, sent to Darius the king.

7 They sent a report to him in which it was written thus: “To Darius the king, all peace.

8 Let it be known to the king that we have gone to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God, which is being built with huge stones, and beams are being laid in the walls; and this work is going on with great care and is succeeding in their hands.

9 Then we asked those elders and said to them thus, ‘Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?’

10 We also asked them their names so as to inform you, and that we might write down the names of the men who were at their head.

11 Thus they answered us, saying, ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished.

12 But because our fathers had provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, *who* destroyed this temple and deported the people to Babylon.

13 However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God.

14 Also the gold and silver utensils of the house of God which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, and brought them to the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon and they were given to one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor.

15 He said to him, "Take these utensils, go *and* deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem and let the house of God be rebuilt in its place."

16 Then that Sheshbazzar came *and* laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from then until now it has been under construction and it is not *yet* completed.'

17 "Now if it pleases the king, let a search be conducted in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, if it be that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this house of God at Jerusalem; and let the king send to us his decision concerning this *matter*."

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

Haggai 2:1–9

1 On the twenty-first of the seventh month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet saying,

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

3 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison?

4 But now take courage, Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD, 'take courage also, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you people of the land take courage,' declares the LORD, 'and work; for I am with you,' declares the LORD of hosts.

5 'As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!'

6 For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

7 I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.

8 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts.

9 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the LORD 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 of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying,

2 "The LORD was very angry with your fathers.

3 "Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return to Me," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I may return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

4 "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds."' But they did not listen or give heed to Me," declares the LORD.

5 "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?"

6 "But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers? Then they repented and said, 'As the LORD of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and 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 of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Haggai the prophet, saying,

11 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Ask now the priests *for* a ruling:

12 If a man carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and touches bread with this fold, or cooked food, wine, oil, or any *other* food, will it become holy?'" And the priests answered, "No."

13 Then Haggai said, "If one who is unclean from a corpse touches any of these, will *the latter* become unclean?" And the priests answered, "It will become unclean."

14 Then Haggai said, "'So is this people. And so is this nation before Me,' declares the LORD, 'and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.

15 But now, do consider from this day onward: before one stone was placed on another in the temple of the LORD,

16 from that time *when* one came to a *grain* heap of twenty *measures*, there would be only ten; and *when* one came to the wine vat

to draw fifty measures, there would be *only* twenty.

17 I smote you *and* every work of your hands with blasting wind, mildew and hail; yet you *did* not *come back* to Me,' declares the LORD.

18 'Do consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth *month*; from the day when the temple of the LORD was founded, consider:

19 Is the seed still in the barn? Even including the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree, it has not borne *fruit*. Yet from this day on I will bless *you*.'"

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

Haggai 2:20–23

20 Then the word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth *day* of the month, saying,

21 "Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah, saying, 'I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. [[Heb 12:26](#)]

22 I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.'

23 'On that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like a signet *ring*, for I have chosen you,'" declares the LORD 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 a decree, and search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon.

2 In Ecbatana in the fortress, which is in the province of Media, a scroll was found and there was written in it as follows:

"Memorandum—

3 In the first year of King Cyrus, Cyrus the king issued a decree: '*Concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem, let the temple, the place where sacrifices are offered, be rebuilt and let its foundations be retained, its height being 60 cubits and its width 60 cubits;

4 with three layers of huge stones and one layer of timbers. And let the cost be paid from the royal treasury.

5 Also let the gold and silver utensils of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be returned and brought to their places in the temple in Jerusalem; and you shall put *them* in the house of God.'

Darius' Order to Tattenai

6 "Now *therefore*, Tattenai, governor of *the province* beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and your colleagues, the officials of *the provinces* beyond the River, keep away from there.

7 Leave this work on the house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

8 Moreover, I issue a decree concerning what you are to do for these elders of Judah in the rebuilding of this house of God: the full cost is to be paid to these people from the royal treasury out of the taxes of *the provinces* beyond the River, and that without delay.

9 Whatever is needed, both young bulls, rams, and lambs for a burnt offering to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and anointing oil, as the priests in Jerusalem request, *it* is to be given to them daily without fail,

10 that they may offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

11 And I issued a decree that any man who violates this edict, a timber shall be drawn from his house and he shall be impaled on it and his house shall be made a refuse heap on account of this.

12 May the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who attempts to change *it*, so as to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have issued *this* decree, let *it* be carried out with all diligence!"

Tattenai Immediately Obeyes

13 Then Tattenai, the governor of *the province* beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues carried out *the decree* with all diligence, just as King Darius had sent.

14a And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo.