

## Promise Keeper

### Ezra 5:1-17

- The children of Judah having returned to Jerusalem started to rebuild their city beginning with the construction of an altar, this led to the reinstitution of the burnt offerings and sacrifices, culminating in the people laying the foundation of the temple. But once word got it what the Jewish people were doing that's when the opposition rose up, first **using deception**, and when that didn't work **threats**.
- **2 Cor 2:11** > "do not be ignorant of Satan's devices" our enemy is not some mindless being that shows up randomly to interrupt our peace, no he is a cunning, scheming, strategic, fallen angel who watches and studies mankind patiently waiting for us to stumble into position in order for him to strike and destroy any good work that God intended to do in our lives and for His glory, that's the goal of the enemy of our souls.

### V1-17

- Last week we saw the Samaritans, Jewish people from the ten northern tribes mixed with the foreign nations in which the Assyrians conquered and then transported back into the area in which the northern kingdom existed, try and infiltrate, intimidate, and finally instigate a shutdown of the rebuilding of Jerusalem.
- These are the seeds that were planted when Jesus came on the scene and the Jewish people were told to avoid at all costs the Samaritans, who centuries earlier had caused them so much trouble when they returned from Babylon to rebuild the city and restore the worship that had been so violently taken away. Here is why there was so much hostility between them when Jesus was preaching the gospel to the Jewish people, but The Lord broke down those barriers in **Acts 8:4-8**.
- **V1-2** Haggai the prophet, and Zecharia the son of Iddo are used by God to speak to the people of Judah and remind them of what they came back to Jerusalem to do. After the letter writing campaign and the spiritual attacks that caused the King of the Meds and Persians to stop the work, instead of the people praying and fasting to The Lord to move upon the heart of the king on their behalf, they instead began to focus on themselves rather than God, and so you wouldn't believe what they did.

- They took the materials that they had gathered for the temple construction, and they used it to build homes and businesses for themselves, and once you begin to take from God and use it for yourself, you will forget the purpose for which God gave it to you in the first place. Folks this happened for well over a decade, people do this all the time don't they, they look at what they have and instead of seeing it as belonging to God they erroneously think it's theirs to do with as they please.
- Although we forget God never forgets, and He raises up two men to stir up the people once again and remind them of why He brought them back to this place > **Hagg 1:2-11** God used them to preach the ministry of correction in order for the ministry of encouragement to return. As they lay out their homes with fancy nice things but the house of God laid in ruins, so The Lord caused a drought so their crops didn't come in, the money they earned wasn't benefitting them anymore.
- **1Thess 5:24**-God is faithful > if He calls you to a **work**, don't focus on the obstacles concerning the **work**, but fix your eyes on the God Who desires you to complete the **work**. After the preaching of these two men it stirred the leaders back into action, never underestimate the power of the faithful preaching of God's Word. For any work of God, that isn't built on the word of God, does not glorify God, and won't last
- **V3-5** it didn't take long before word spread that they were at it again rebuilding the temple, remember in chapter four it was Rehum and Shimshai, now twenty years later it's Tattenai and Shethar-Boznai, the names and faces may change but the message doesn't, because it comes from the same source. The Samaritan home owners association wants them to stop building for the Kingdom of God.
- **V6-10** they even ask for the names of those working in order to include in their letter to the King of the defiance of the people of Judah. But notice it says the eye of God was on them so they couldn't make the Jews stop the work, showing that if God is for you then it doesn't matter who is against us.
- **V8** they lie to the King saying when we checked out the building it didn't look like they were building a temple to worship in but a fortress to rebel against you. Also you better hurry with an answer as the work is going up real fast, real scoundrels.

- **V11-17** the letter informs the king what the people of Judah said when they questioned them, and remember before in chapter three it says they were already afraid when they built the altar, so in chapter four it was easy for them to quit and move on when the opposition intensified. But now you don't hear fear only boldness, and its because of the faithful preaching of Haggai and Zecharia reminding them of what God said and how He protects those who fear Him.
- By answering this way it showed that the Jewish leaders were now totally dependent upon God to intervene on their behalf, as they frame their answers in such a way that their enemies and the King knows that it was their disobedience against God that caused their demise and not their enemies strength.