

“REBUILDING BROKEN PLACES”
STUDIES IN THE BOOKS OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND HAGGAI
Ezra 5:1-6:22; Haggai 2:1-23
“Latter House Glory”

Introduction: The remnant of Israelites has returned to Judea from the Babylonian captivity. They were tasked with rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. They rebuilt the altar and reinstated the scheduled ritual sacrifices. They laid the foundation for the new temple. But just when they were making progress opposition came, the people got complacent, and the work stopped. The rebuilding of the temple was a step in God’s plan for the ages. Do you see God’s eternal plan in the work He has given you to do?

I. Despise not Prophesying (Ezra 5:1-2; Haggai 1:12-15)

- a. Haggai and Zechariah provide prophetic inspiration to the people. Prophets, Priests, and Kings were the anointed leaders in Old Testament Israel. Zerubbabel represented the royal line of Judah.
- b. What is the role of the prophets? (1 Corinthians 14:3) edification, exhortation, and comfort. The Greek word is a construction term. It is the word of God that builds us up into what God wants us to be. As the word of God builds you up; you can use the word of God to build others up.

II. Three Prophetic Messages and Two Considerations (Haggai 2:1-23)

- a. Message #1. God knows they felt the new temple did not compare to Solomon’s temple (Ezra 3:12). God’s presence is more valuable than any amount of money. If you have the presence of the Lord, you have everything you need! God is speaking to the group of people rebuilding the temple as if they were at the Exodus (Hebrews 7:9-10). The physical temple is merely a foreshadow of the eschatological messianic reality. (Hebrews 12:26-28; Malachi 3:1). God was getting ready to fund the current project through their enemies. The glory of the latter temple will be greater than the glory of the former temple. This could refer to the glory of Christ in the millennial temple and the glory of Christ in the New Heaven and New Earth (Ezekiel 40-48; Revelation 21:22). No physical building will ever compare to the glory of the latter house!
- b. Message #2. Religious activity does not make you holy. The people were living in disobedience to God’s mission. God had commanded them to build the temple and they fell into complacency and disobedience.
 - i. Consideration #1: If the people were in disobedience, they would suffer loss. God messed with their prosperity to provoke repentance.
 - ii. Consideration #2: They planted but did not harvest. Now that they are back on mission; God will bless. The law of Moses connected obedience to prosperity.
- c. Message #3. Christ will return and defeat wicked nations/kingdom of darkness. The Lord is speaking prophetically over Zerubbabel as a type of Christ. The Servant of the Lord is a Messianic title (Matthew 12:15-21). Signet/Seal is impression that certifies documents

(Jeremiah 22:24) – signifies close relationship. Chosen One is a Messianic title (Luke 23:35).

III. God can Turn Haters into Helpers (Ezra 5:3-6:22)

- a. The governor sends a letter to king Darius asking for confirmation of Cyrus decree. The Jews declared they are servants of God and summarize 1 Kings 6-Ezra 3. King Solomon built the original temple (960 BC). The people provoked God to wrath over 373 years (960 BC to 587 BC). God is slow to wrath (Psalm 103:8). God used king Cyrus to end the captivity and rebuild the temple. Sheshbazzar was tasked with returning items to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. The decree was found in Media and the story of the Jews. King Darius ordered the governor to leave the Jews alone (Acts 5:33-39). The king diverted tax money from their region to fund the project. The temple was finished in the last month of the year in 516 BC. The temple was dedicated with joy.
- b. Passover is celebrated in the first month of the year. During the original Passover in Egypt the blood of the lamb caused death to pass over the covered house and provoked the Exodus from Egypt. People separated themselves from filth (sin, idolatry, spiritual uncleanness) and committed to holiness. What does holiness look like in your life? Passage ends with reminder that God turned the hearts of kings to favor His mission (Proverbs 21:1).

“But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive” (Genesis 50:20). “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose” (Romans 8:28). GOD’S PLAN FOR THE AGES WILL COME TO PASS. ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH IN WHICH RIGHTEOUSNESS DWELLS OR HAVE YOU SET YOUR HOPES ON THE TEMPORARY PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD. ARE YOU A HELPER (DILIGENTLY WORKING IN THE HARVEST) OR A HATER (OPPOSING THE WORK OF GOD THROUGH DOUBT, LAZINESS, AND APATHY). GOD COMMANDS ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE TO REPENT, BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND YOU WILL RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE.

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