

A Chronological Overview Relevant to Ezra 6:1-12
Pastor Karl Payne, March 14th, 2021

- 586 Nebuchadnezzar conquers Judah at God's bidding. (**Jer.19:14-20:6; 21:6-10; 25:8-11; 27:5-8, 21-22; 29:8-10**)
- 559-530 Cyrus reigns at God's bidding. (**Ezra 1:1; Daniel 9:1-2; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-3, 11-13**)
- 539 Cyrus conquers Babylon. (**Jeremiah 25:12**)
- 538 Cyrus initiates the return of 50 K Jews to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple, (**Ezra 1:2-4**). {Ezra leads the second group back in 458 to institute (religious reforms); Nehemiah leads the third group in 444 to rebuild the (walls of the city)}.
- 536-520 The temple alter is completed first, 537, (**3:1-3**) resulting in sacrifices and fear. This was followed by the completion of the temple foundation in 535 (**3:7-8**), resulting in rejoicing and weeping from those looking back, and those looking forward (**3:10-13**). The rejoicing brought opposition that delayed further temple building for about 15 years. During the temple building delay, the people built their own homes and concentrating on their own needs and comforts.
- 521-486 Darius I reigns in Persia.
- 520-515 Temple work begins in earnest under directives of sacred prophesying/preaching from Haggai "my feast" (**Haggai 1:1-12**) and Zechariah "Yahweh remembers" (**Zech.3:1-7; 4:6-9**), and the secular intervention of Darius (6:1-12). The temple rebuilding is completed within five years.

536-515-temple rebuilding under Zerubbabel/Jeshua (Ezra 1-6)

458-420-religious reform, wall and city rebuilding under Ezra and Nehemiah) (Ezra 7-10)

- 520 The motivation to begin rebuilding the temple again. **Ez. 5:1-2**
The opposition from Tattenai to begin rebuilding the temple again. **Ez. 5:3-10**
The response from Zerubbabel and Jeshua to Tattenai's opposition. **Ez. 5:11-17**
- The response of King Darius to the search request of Zerubbabel and Jeshua. **Ez.6:1-12**
- a) The tale of two cities, **6:1-2.**
 - b) The law of the Medes & Persians by the decree of Cyrus cannot be broken **6:3-5.**
 - c) Gov. Tattenai and your colleagues, back off and leave this rebuilding alone, **6:6-7.**
 - d) In addition, you are to collect taxes to pay for the full cost of this rebuild, **6:8**
 - e) In addition you are to provide everything needed for their sacrifices on a daily basis, so they can pray for the King and his sons, **6:9-10.**
 - f) In addition, make it clear that anyone violating my decree will be impaled and their house destroyed. **6:11.**

- g) In addition, I petition the God of these people to overthrow any king or people ignoring this decree or attempting to destroy the temple of God in Jerusalem, **6:12a**.
- h) Finally, carry out this decree immediately and with diligent urgency, **6:12b**.

Some take-a ways to consider from Ezra 6:1-12.

God's Word, Scripture/Prophecy, is to be believed and obeyed, not deconstructed or apologized for; read and understood in a plain, literal, grammatical, historical method.

Note--The primary reason the book of Isaiah is often divided and subdivided by people rejecting inerrancy is specifically because of Cyrus being identified, by name, by the prophet Isaiah, approximately 140 years before Cyrus was even born.

I understand why a naturalist would strain so hard at trying to find an alternative that rejects the supernatural a priori. What is more difficult to understand is why professing Christians, who say they believe in miracles and the supernatural, i.e. the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, would feel so compelled to stand in agreement with those who oppose a biblical worldview. (Think about the creation/evolution debate in the same terms.)

Fear of our opposition is not a biblical motivator for a Christian; our God is too small.

Religious syncretism and theological compromise to win favor or avoid conflict are not biblical responses for a Christian; our faith is too small.

Godly rebuilding outside begins with spiritual renewal inside.

The fall of Judah in 586 was preceded by warnings, teaching and prophecy, (**Jeremiah 25:8-11**).

The leaders responded by disobeying God; imprisoning and attempting to kill Jeremiah.

Note-- Teaching that faithful obedience guarantees health, wealth and prosperity is a lie.

The rebuilding of the temple in 520-515 began with the teaching and prophesying, of Haggai and Zechariah (**5:1-2**)--notice the word "then". They responded in obedience to God. The temple was completed within five years. Remember Joshua before going to war?

God alone is the true sovereign.

"I demand" "I deserve" "I am entitled" "Look at the work of my hands" is the language of the arrogant and spiritually immature. Nebuchadnezzar figured this out, (**Daniel 4:34-35**).

Opposing God, His plans, His promises, His people and His Word, is ultimately an exercise in futility for Christians or non-Christians. God does not need a counselor or the approval of others. God humiliated Tattenai and his band of cohorts. They were proud, arrogant and foolish believing they could successfully oppose the hand of God. (**Isaiah 14:27; 43:13 45:6-7; 45:23**).

"You can pay me now or you will pay me later" (Mr. Goodwrench) We can bow to the Lord Jesus Christ now as Savior or later as judge, but one day everyone is going to bow to Him. Do you want to meet Jesus Christ as the Lamb or the Lion; your savior or your judge? After death, there is no longer an option. (**Matthew 25:34, 41, 46; John 3:16-18; Philip. 2:9-11; Revelation 19:11-16; 21:6-8**).