

EZRA 5

Rebuilding Begins Anew

1Now the prophets, Haggai 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. 2Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were with them, supporting them.

3At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus: “Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?” 4They also asked them this: “What are the names of the men who are building this building?” 5But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report should reach Darius and then an answer be returned by letter concerning it.

Tattenai’s Letter to King Darius

6This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates, the governors who were in the province Beyond the River, sent to Darius the king. 7They sent him a report, in which was written as follows: “To Darius the king, all peace. 8Be it known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being built with huge stones, and timber is laid in the walls. This work goes on diligently and prospers in their hands. 9Then we asked those elders and spoke to them thus: ‘Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?’ 10We also asked them their names, for your information, that we might write down the names of their leaders. 11And this was their reply to us: ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. 12But because our fathers had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia. 13However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt. 14And the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple that was in Jerusalem and brought into the temple of Babylon, these Cyrus the king took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; 15and he said to him, "Take these vessels, go and put them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site." 16Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and from that time until now it has been in building, and it is not yet finished.' 17Therefore, if it seems good to the king, let search be made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by Cyrus the king for the rebuilding of this house of God

in Jerusalem. And let the king send us his pleasure in this matter."

Opening Discussion Questions

Questions here

- a. Have you ever been discouraged by people and then had another person or people speak encouraging words to you?
- b. Are you more of a Debbie downer or a Polyanna?

Bible Study Questions

1. Who are the cast of characters in Ezra ch. 5?

Haggai, the Prophet (Festival or Born of a festival)
Ezra 1:1, Haggai 1:1-15

Zechariah (Jehovah remembers) the Prophet (Son of Iddo -a priest Neh 12:1,4) Zechariah 1:1-6

Zerubbabel (Begotten in Babylon) (Son of Shealtiel) I Chron. 3:19, Matt. 1:12, Hag. 2:20 – 23
Ezra 5:14 (Governor appointed by King Cyrus)/**Sheshbazzar** (Name given to Zerubbabel by Babylonians)

Joshua (Son of Jozadak) Zech 3

Tattenai (Governor of Trans-Euphrates) Persian
Ezra 5:3 (Wikipedia)

Shethar-Bozenai Persian official Ezra 5:3
(Wikipedia)

King Darius (He that informs himself or a King)
(522 – 486 BC) Persian, Ezra 4:24 (Wikipedia)

Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean, King of Babylon
(Captured Jerusalem on 597 BC) Wikipedia

Cyrus King of Babylon Foretold of by the prophet
Isa 45 (@681 BC, II Cron.36:22-23 (559-530 BC)

2. What is the biblical definition of a prophet of God?

Deut. 13:1-4, Deut. 18:22, 1Co 14:29 - 33

3. Were there woman prophets? Miriam – Ex 15:20, Deborah - Judges 4:4, Huldah - 2 Kings 22:14, 23 Chron 34:22, Wife of Isaiah – Isaiah 8:3, Anna - Luke 2:36-38, Four virgin daughters of Philip – Acts 21:89

4. Unpack the prophecy in Haggai 1:1-15 and how you can apply it to your life today?

5. Unpack the prophecy Zech 1:1-6 and how you can apply it to your life today?

6. How did the leaders identify themselves when asked their names? What was their story, and were they sticking to it?
