

Ezra 6 - God Responds to Obedience

Last time we looked at the prophets Haggai and Zechariah and the message God spoke through them to Zerubbabel, Joshua and the remnant of the people.

They had left off building

- They were **focused on their own house** for **16 years** they were sidelined

Then the two prophets Haggai and Zechariah spoke

There was no blessing: [see Haggai 1]

- sown much - harvested little
- You eat, but you never have enough;
- you drink, but you never have your fill.
- You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm.
- And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.
- You looked for much, and behold, it came to little.
- And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the LORD of hosts. **Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.**
- Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and
- The earth has withheld its produce.
- I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast, and on all their labors."

Hag 1:8 Go up to the hills and bring wood and BUILD the house

It is at the point of obedience the LORD WORKS

- Hag 1:12 - they **OBEYED** the voice of the Lord
- Hag 1:14 - **the LORD stirred their spirit**
- **OBEEDIENCE PRECEDES STIRRING**

The opposition was stirred up again - "who authorized you to rebuild?"

Those who were questioning their authority to rebuild sent a note to Darius...

- ...to search the archives to see if a command to rebuild was actually decreed...

The Original Decree Discovered

Ezr 6:1-22 NIV King Darius then issued an order, and they searched in the archives stored in the treasury at Babylon. (2) A scroll was found in the citadel of Ecbatana in the province of Media, and this was written on it: Memorandum: (3) In the first year of King Cyrus, the king issued a decree concerning the temple of God in Jerusalem: **Let the temple be rebuilt as a place to present sacrifices, and let its foundations be laid. It is to be sixty cubits high and sixty cubits wide, (4) with three courses of large stones and one of timbers. The costs are to be paid by the royal treasury. (5) Also, the gold and silver articles** of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, are to be returned to their places in the temple in Jerusalem; they are to be deposited in the house of God.

Darius' Reinforced the Original Decree

(6) Now then, Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and you other officials of that province, **stay away from there.** (7) **Do not interfere** with the work on this temple of God. Let the governor of the Jews and the Jewish elders rebuild this house of God on its site. (8) Moreover, I hereby decree what you are to do for these elders of the Jews in the construction of this house of God: **Their expenses are to be fully paid out of the royal treasury, from the revenues of Trans-Euphrates, so that the work will not stop.** (9) **Whatever is needed**--young bulls, rams, male lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and olive oil, as requested by the priests in Jerusalem--**must be given them daily without fail,** (10) so that they may offer sacrifices pleasing to the God of heaven and pray for the well-being of the king and his sons. (11) Furthermore, I decree that **if anyone defies this edict, a beam is to be pulled from their house and they are to be impaled on it.** And for this crime their house is to be made a pile of rubble. (12) ***May God, who has caused his Name to dwell there, overthrow any king or people who lifts a hand to change this decree or to destroy this temple in Jerusalem. I Darius have decreed it. Let it be carried out with diligence.***

This is evidence of God's blessing - a complete reversal

- Darius tells the opposition to **Stay Away**
- Do not **interfere**
- Their **expenses** are to be **fully paid**
- **Whatever is needed** -- must be given them **daily without fail**
- **If anyone defies** this edict - YIKES - they will meet a terrible end
- May God overthrow any king or people who lifts a hand to change this decree
- I have decreed it - **Let it be carried out with diligence**

The people were now doing the will of God - He was 110% behind the effort

They Built and PROSPERED, Finished and Celebrated with JOY

(13) Then, because of the decree King Darius had sent, Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates **carried it out with diligence**. (14) So the elders of the Jews continued to ***build and prosper under the preaching of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah, a descendant of Iddo. They finished building the temple according to the command*** of the God of Israel and the *decrees* of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia. The temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. 16 Then the people of Israel--the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles--***celebrated the dedication of the house of God with joy.***

- The opposition carried out his decree with diligence
- They built and prospered under the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah
- They Finished Building - May We Have a Heart to Finish Well

When We Obey God Responds

Genesis 22:17-18 **I will surely bless you, because you have obeyed my voice."**

Luk 6:37-38 NIV ... **Forgive, and you will be forgiven.** 38 **Give, and it will be given to you.**

1Jn 1:9 NIV **If we confess our sins**, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins

Obedience is tied to faith

Heb 11:8 ESV By **faith Abraham obeyed ...** And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

- **He didn't know where he was going - but HE KNEW the one who told him to go**

Obedience is tied to love

Joh 14:23-24 NIV Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24 Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

Obedience Produces Joy

John 15:9-11 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this **so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.**

He is searching for the heart that is FULLY His

2Ch 16:9 NIV For **the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.**