

# Ezra – Chapter Six

## “How We Can Face Uncertain Days”

### Timeline

Cyrus the Great 559-530  
First Wave Returned 538 (Zerubbabel & Jeshua)  
Work on Temple Begins 536  
Work on the Temple Ceases 536 or 535  
Darius 521-486  
Haggai & Zechariah Write Their Prophecies 520  
Work on the Temple Resumes 520  
Temple Completed 516

### Review

#### Chapter 5

- 1-2** The prophets Haggai & Zechariah were used by God to call His people to repentance and refocus them on the task God had assigned to them 18 years earlier.
- 3** When they resumed building the Temple, Tattenai, the Persian Governor of the region, questioned their authority to do so and took names to report them to the King Darius.
- 4-17** After hearing the explanation of the Jewish leaders, Tattenai sent a letter to Darius asking him to conduct a search and see if documentation could be found of Cyrus issuing a decree permitting the Jews to rebuild the Temple.

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### The Discovery of the Building Permit 1-5

- 1** King Darius issued a decree to search for documentation of the Cyrus Decree.
- 2** Achmetha is where King Cyrus stayed in the summer of 538 - the year of the decree.
- 3-5** This was not a copy of the decree but a record that the decree had been issued.

### The Decree of Darius to Let the Work Go On 6-12

- 6-7** To Tattenai:
- “Stay out of the way!” “Leave these people alone!”
- 8**
- “**Pay for their project** out of the taxes you collect in your region.”
- 9-10**
- “Make sure they have **whatever they need** for their sacrifices.”
- 11**
- “Crucify anyone who doesn’t obey this decree!”
- 12**
- “May their God destroy anyone who doesn’t obey it!”

### The Diligence of the People 13-15

- 13** Tattenai and the other Persian administrators were diligent to obey. (I reckon so!)
- 14-15** The Jewish leaders and people continued working until they completed the Temple in 516, which was 70 years from when Solomon’s Temple had been destroyed in 586.
- Altogether, it took them 4 years, 5 months, and ten days to complete the work once they resumed. (Haggai 1:15)
  - This second Temple was not as glorious as Solomon’s Temple. (Haggai 2:3)
  - Haggai encouraged them with the Word of the Lord of hosts that the glory of the Temple they had built would be greater than the glory of Solomon’s Temple and that “in this place I will give peace.” (Haggai 2:9)

## The Dedication of the Temple 16-18

- 16** They celebrated with joy.  
**17-18** They offered sacrifices. (Not nearly so many as were offered at the dedication of Solomon's Temple – 2 Chronicles 7: 22,000 bulls, 120,000 sheep.)

## The Days of Joy That Came 19-22

- 19-20** The priests and Levites had heeded the rebukes of Haggai and Zechariah regarding their neglect of the laws about ceremonial cleanness.  
**21** Other inhabitants of the land were able to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread with them.  
**22** The LORD was the source of their joy.

## Doctrinal Conclusions

### How do we face uncertain days in our lives?:

- 1. We must continue to trust God for all the details of our lives (both big and small) and not dread what may happen, knowing He will be with us.**

**Isaiah 41:10** Fear not, for I *am* with you; Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

#### "God Moves in a Mysterious Way"

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take!  
The clouds you so much dread  
Are big with mercy and shall break in  
Blessings on your head!

- 2. We must continue to diligently obey what we know of God's will.**

**Colossians 3:23-24** And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, (**24**) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

- 3. We must not despise the day of small things. He knows what He's doing!**

**Zechariah 4:10** For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

- 4. We must find our joy in the Lord each day and remember that perfect joy is our destiny.**

**Nehemiah 8:10b** ... *this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*"

**Psalms 126:5** Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.

**Psalms 30:5** For His anger *is but for a moment*, His favor *is for life*; Weeping may endure for a night, But joy *comes* in the morning.