

enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”

⁷This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways.⁸ Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,” says the Lord. ⁹“You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?” declares the Lord Almighty. “Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house. ¹⁰Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops.¹¹ I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands.”

¹²Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the Lord their God had sent him. And the people feared the Lord.

¹³Then Haggai, the Lord’s messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: “I am with you,” declares the Lord. ¹⁴So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God, ¹⁵on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.

ZECHARIAH 4

¹⁰“Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the Lord that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of Zerubbabel?”

¹¹Then I asked the angel, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?”

¹²Again I asked him, “What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?”

¹³He replied, “Do you not know what these are?”

“No, my lord,” I said.

¹⁴So he said, “These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth.”

The Surprising Ways of God

Ezra 5

GOD faithfully _____ us.
...the eye of their God was watching over

- To the ALTAR – Ezra 3
- Through the STANDSTILL – Ezra 5:1
- Through GODLY LEADERS – Ezra 5:1-2
- Through UNGODLY LEADERS – Ezra 5: 5

GOD brings us back to _____.
...the name of the God of Israel, who was over them

- To the ALTAR – Ezra 3
- Through the STANDSTILL – Haggai 1:6
- Through GODLY LEADERS – Ezra 5:1
- Through UNGODLY LEADERS – Haggai 1:6

GOD remains in _____.
...give careful thought to your ways

- By the ALTAR – Ezra 3
- Through the STANDSTILL – Ezra 5:1
- Through GODLY LEADERS – Zechariah 4:11-14 (The Oil Guys) Haggai 2:23
- Through UNGODLY LEADERS – Ezra 6:6 (Tattenai) Haggai 2:22

EZRA 4

²³ As soon as the copy of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read to Rehum and Shimshai the secretary and their associates, they went immediately to the Jews in Jerusalem and compelled them by force to stop. ²⁴ Thus the work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

EZRA 5

¹ Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. ² Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jozadak set to work to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them, supporting them.

³ At that time Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates went to them and asked, “Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and to finish it?” ⁴ They also asked, “What are the names of those who are constructing this building?” ⁵ But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until a report could go to Darius and his written reply be received.

⁶ This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates, the officials of Trans-Euphrates, sent to King Darius. ⁷ The report they sent him read as follows:

To King Darius:

Cordial greetings.

⁸ The king should know that we went to the district of Judah, to the temple of the great God. The people are building it with large stones and placing the timbers in the walls. The work is being carried on with diligence and is making rapid progress under their direction.

⁹ We questioned the elders and asked them, “Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and to finish it?” ¹⁰ We also asked them their names, so that we could write down the names of their leaders for your information.

¹¹ This is the answer they gave us:

“We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, one that a great king of Israel built and finished. ¹² But because our ancestors angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean, king of Babylon, who destroyed this temple and deported the people to Babylon.

¹³ “However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God. ¹⁴ He even removed from the temple of Babylon the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to the temple in Babylon. Then King Cyrus gave them to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor, ¹⁵ and he told him, ‘Take these articles and go and deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem. And rebuild the house of God on its site.’

¹⁶ “So this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem. From that day to the present it has been under construction but is not yet finished.”

¹⁷ Now if it pleases the king, let a search be made in the royal archives of Babylon to see if King Cyrus did in fact issue a decree to rebuild this house of God in Jerusalem. Then let the king send us his decision in this matter.

HAGGAI 1

¹ In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest:

² This is what the Lord Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord’s house.’”

³ Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: ⁴ “Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?”

⁵ Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways. ⁶ You have planted much but harvested little. You eat, but never have