

## Ezra 5, “Back in the Saddle Again” 5/21/23

### Ezra 5:1-2

*The Lord sends 2 prophets to encourage the exiles to resume work on the temple:*

**Haggai** – gives 4 messages over 4 mos. to the exiles in 520 BC. (1:2-11. Exiles have made 3 F’s)

- **F**orsaken the Lord by giving in to your own comfort & desires (living in paneled houses).
- **F**eared the world, not the Lord...**not** learning from the Lord’s discipline (\$, crop failure).
- **F**orgotten that the Lord is with you.

**Zechariah** – preached 2 yrs. Gave them hope: God keeps His word, so put His kingdom first!

Zech. 1:3, “Return to me says the LORD of hosts, & I will return to you.”

- Zechariah: The Lord remembers. Berechiah: The Lord blesses. Iddo: At the appointed time.
- “The Lord remembers, the Lord blesses, at the appointed time.” Your focus: on the Lord!

### Ezra 5:11-14

*The Elders answer 5 questions:*

1) Who are we? “The servants of the God of heaven & earth” –

- 2 interpretations of the title:
  - Jews are being shrewd. Darius is a follower of Ahura Mazda, “God of heaven.”
  - Jews are being bold. “The God of Heaven **AND** earth.” Challenge the Persians...

2) What are we doing? “Rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built & finished.”

3) Why are we in this predicament? “Our fathers provoked the God of heaven to wrath.”

4) How did it occur? “He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar...”

5) Why are we rebuilding the temple? “A decree was issued by King Cyrus.”