

DUNAMIS

Power Hour

for the love of the Word

----- journey through the Bible -----



EZRA

1 Kings 8:27

**But will God really dwell on earth?
The heavens, even the highest
heaven, cannot contain you. How
much less this temple I have built!**

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Overview of the Book

Date of Writing

Between 460 and 440 B.C.

Author (not certain)

Ezra the Scribe and Priest in the Book of Ezra, was a Jewish scribe and priest sent with religious and political powers by the Persian King Artaxerxes to lead a group of Jewish exiles from Babylon to Jerusalem ...

The Theme

Main theme of Ezra is one of **restoration**

- of the people to God
- to their land from Babylon to the **Promised Land**
- the restoration of the Temple and proper worship of God.

The emphasis in Ezra is

On the rebuilding of the Temple

The Book of Ezra is written against a **worldwide backdrop** of change and search for meaning. During this time period, Gautama Buddha (c. 560-480 B.C.) was in India, Confucius (531-479 B.C) was in China, and Socrates (470-399 B.C.) was in Greece. Throughout the world, these new philosophies and ways of thinking began to appear that continue to influence the world to this day.



Why was the Temple so important

- The Temple or Tabernacle was a **sacred place** to the ancient Israelites.
- There, Israel's priestly representatives entered into **God's presence** on behalf of the people to offer sacrifices and be in the **presence of God**.
- The Temple attracted Israelite pilgrims for centuries and was a **cornerstone of their covenant relationship with God**.

Eph 2:20-22 [The Church] “built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a **dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**”

In **John 1** we hear this announcement, “The Word became flesh & dwelt among us” (literally) “The Word became flesh & **tabernacled among us**” ..This new & better temple had come down from heaven.

Jesus fulfills the former Temple (saying) “The only Temple you need to worship God is... me.”
You enter into God’s presence through me now!”



The First Return (Ezra 1-3)

Isaiah prophecies 150 years before the very name **Cyrus: Persian Conqueror**

49 697 People returning

Zerubbabel was leader of the first group with the high priest Jeshua
Jeremiah & Ezekiel prophecies of the exile but also God's faithfulness

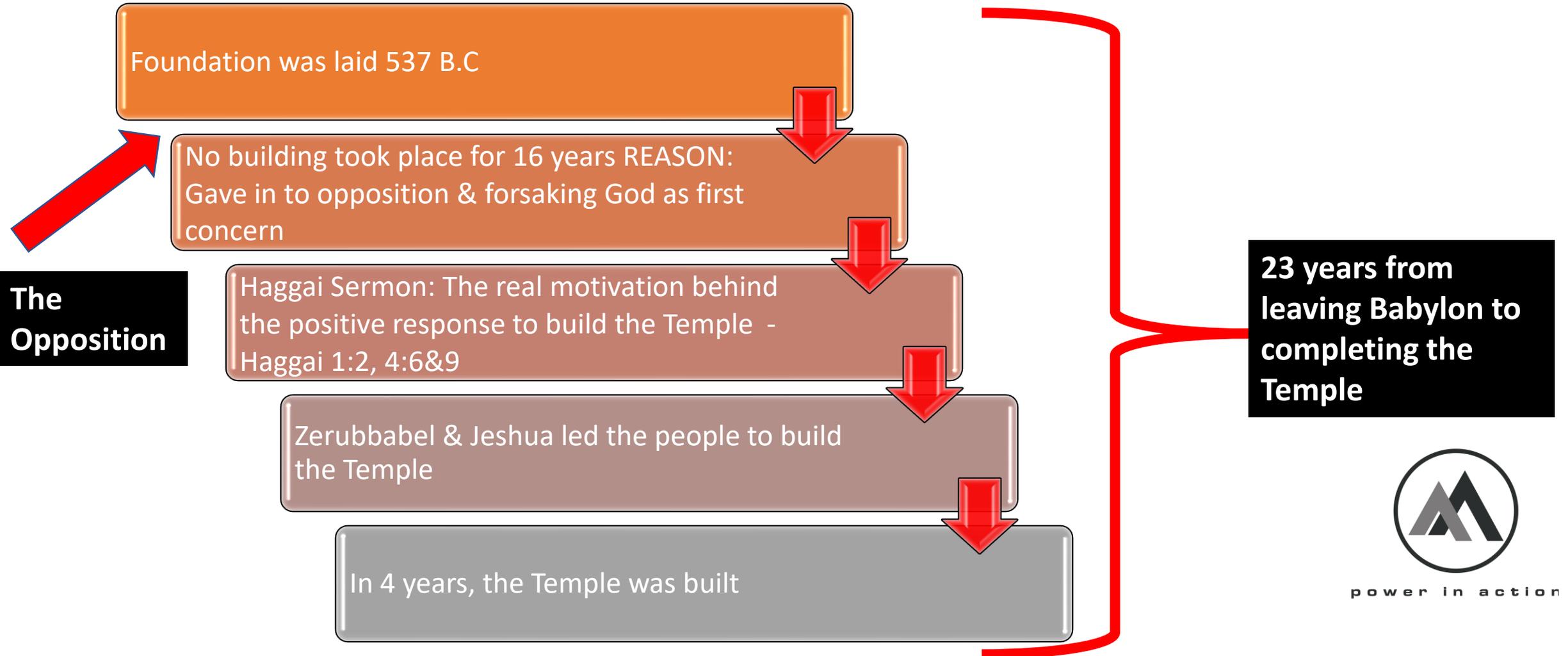


During this events Ezra was not yet born but 80 years later he would follow this first group's path from Babylon to the Holy Land



power in action

Temple Building – Ezra 4-6; Hag 1:1-2:9



Opposition to Rebuilding – Ezra 4:1-5

When the **enemies of Judah and Benjamin** heard that the exiles were building a temple for the Lord, the God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.” **BUT ZERUBBABEL, JOSHUA AND THE REST OF THE HEADS OF THE FAMILIES OF ISRAEL ANSWERED**, “You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. **WE ALONE** will build it for the Lord, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us.” **Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. 5 They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.**



The Second Return (Ezra 7-10)

In 458 B.C 58 years after the completion of the Temple, **Ezra** led a group of 1500 men & families back to where they were coming from

Artaxerxes

Decree, grants eg
Old Testament Law was affirmed as the civil & religious code of the land

People turned away from His instruction on how to live e.g., inter marriages with pagans

EZRA'S Intercessory Prayer

Ezra 9:6-16

The People's response

Ezra 10:1-15



Haggai 1:9

“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.



THANK YOU