

# ROSE UP AND BEGAN TO BUILD

## EZRA 5:1-4

Text:

Introduction:

### 1. OBEDIENCE WAS IMMEDIATE (5:1-2)

#### **Ezra 5:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them. <sup>2</sup> Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem: and with them *were* the prophets of God helping them.

Obedience is immediate. That sounds kind of funny doesn't it? I mean when you think of who we're talking about here. These people had already delayed finishing the temple twice. They delayed for a few months after they got the altar built, before they laid the foundation. And then, once they got the foundation laid, they just quit. They quit for 16 years. So it seems like the word "immediate" wasn't even in their vocabulary. But once they heard the Word of God from the mouths of His prophets, they learned it in a hurry.

Delayed obedience is Disobedience

## **2. OBEDIENCE WAS INSPIRED**

When the Word of God was presented by the prophets, who were the first ones to respond? The leaders.

Remember that Zerubbabel was the chief prince. He was a descendent of King David, so he had every legal right to assume the throne of Israel. But God wouldn't allow it, because they were still under the political rule of Babylon. But even though he couldn't assume the throne, he was the political leader of the remnant. He was their leader.

Jeshua was a leader too. Except whereas Zerubbabel was their chief prince, Jeshua was their chief priest. He was their spiritual leader. It was his job to keep the remnant focused on God.

## **3. OBEDIENCE WAS INCLUSIVE**

Not only did Zerubbabel and Jeshua get involved, look who else did. Verse 2 says that "with them were the prophets of God helping them." Everybody was involved, even Haggai and Zechariah.

## **4. OBEDIENCE WAS INVESTIGATED**

### **Ezra 5:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to

make up this wall? <sup>4</sup> Then said we unto them after this manner,  
What are the names of the men that make this building?

As soon as they got back to doing what they were supposed to do, here comes the opposition. Now, this opposition sounds a lot worse than it is. It's really more about questions than it is about opposition.

During the time when the work on the temple had stopped, there was a regime change. The Medes and the Persians had taken over the empire from the Babylonians. That meant that Cyrus was no longer in charge. Darius had taken over a couple of years ago and was now the king. History tells us that during the first couple of years of Darius' rule, there was a lot of turmoil. So the king's people were naturally suspicious of any building program going on that they didn't approve.

Close:

Just like with the remnant, God has given us His Word.

Except He's given us the whole thing.

He's given us His written Word—the Bible.

He's given us His living Word—Jesus Christ.

The question is—what are we doing with it?

Are we sticking it in the back window of our car, never to be seen except on Sundays?

Are we sticking it on your coffee table at home, only to be dusted off once a week?

Or are we living by it. Are we obeying it?

God's Word calls for immediate, inspired, inclusive obedience.

And you can tell when you're obeying that way, because you will be investigated.

Are we being investigated?

And if we are being investigated, is there enough evidence of our obedience to convict us?

Obedience isn't real complicated.

It doesn't take much.

But it does take that first step.

If you haven't been obedient to God's Word—take that first step of obedience today.