

# UNEFINISHED BUSINESS

THE BITTERSWEET STORY OF EZRA & NEHEMIAH



**At some point, we all  
become disillusioned  
and ask, "Is this it?"**



# Ezra 1:1

ESV

In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be **fulfilled**, the Lord **stirred up the spirit** of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing:

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# Ezra 1:2–3

ESV

<sup>2</sup> “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. <sup>3</sup> Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the

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# **Ezra 1:2–3**

house of the Lord, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem.

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# Ezra 1:4

ESV

<sup>4</sup> And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.”

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# Ezra 3:10–11

ESV

<sup>10</sup> And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the directions of David king of Israel. <sup>11</sup> And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.” And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord, because **the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.**

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# Ezra 3:12–13

ESV

<sup>12</sup> But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, <sup>13</sup> so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the **joyful shout** from the sound of the **people's weeping**, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.

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# Ezra 4:4–6

ESV

<sup>4</sup> Then the people of the land **discouraged** the people of Judah and made them afraid to build <sup>5</sup> and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of **Cyrus** king of Persia, even until the reign of **Darius** king of Persia. <sup>6</sup> And in the reign of **Ahasuerus**, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

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# Ezra 4:24

ESV

<sup>24</sup> Then the work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem **stopped**...

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# Haggai 1:2–4

ESV

<sup>2</sup> “Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.” <sup>3</sup> Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, <sup>4</sup> “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in **your paneled houses**, while this house lies in ruins?

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# Ezra 6:19–20

ESV

<sup>19</sup> On the fourteenth day of the first month, the returned exiles **kept the Passover**. <sup>20</sup> For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were clean. So they slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves.

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# Ezra 6:21–22

ESV

<sup>21</sup> It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by every one who had joined them and separated himself from the uncleanness of the peoples of the land to worship the Lord, the God of Israel. <sup>22</sup> And they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the Lord had made them **joyful** and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work of **the house of God**, the God of Israel.

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# Haggai 2:2–3

ESV

<sup>2</sup> “Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say, <sup>3</sup> ‘Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not **as nothing in your eyes?**’

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# Haggai 2:4–5

ESV

<sup>4</sup> Yet now **be strong**, O Zerubbabel, declares the Lord. **Be strong**, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. **Be strong**, all you people of the land, declares the Lord. **Work**, for I am with you, declares the Lord of hosts, <sup>5</sup> according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. **Fear not.**

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# Haggai 2:6–7

ESV

<sup>6</sup> For thus says the Lord of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. <sup>7</sup> And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will **fill this house with glory**, says the Lord of hosts.

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# Haggai 2:8–9

ESV

<sup>8</sup> The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts. <sup>9</sup> The **latter glory** of this house shall be **greater than the former**, says the Lord of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts.' ”

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**Stop trying to be the **conclusion** and  
be a faithful **continuation**.**

