

hindered them with arm and power.

24 Then the work of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem was interrupted, and ceased till the second year of the reign of Darius king of the Persians.

Chapter 5

Now Aggeus the prophet, and Zacharias the son of Addo, prophesied to the Jews that were in Judea and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel.

2 Then rose up Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, and Josue the son of Josedec, and began to build the temple of God in Jerusalem, and with them were the prophets of God helping them.

3 And at the same time came to them Thathanai, who was governor beyond the river, and Stharbuzanai, and their counsellors: and said thus to them: Who hath given you counsel to build this house, and to repair the walls thereof?

4 In answer to which we gave them the names of the men who were the promoters of that building.

5 But the eye of their God was upon the ancients of the Jews, and they could not hinder them. And it was agreed that the matter should be referred to Darius, and then they should give satisfaction concerning that accusation.

6 The copy of the letter that Thathanai governor of the country beyond the river, and Stharbuzanai, and his counsellors the Arphasachites, who dwelt beyond the river, sent to Darius the king.

7 The letter which they sent him, was written thus: To Darius the king all peace.

8 Be it known to the king, that we went to the province of Judea, to the house of the great God,

which they are building with unpolished stones, and timber is laid in the walls: and this work is carried on diligently and advanceth in their hands.

9 And we asked those ancients, and said to them thus: Who hath given you authority to build this house, and to repair these walls?

10 We asked also of them their names, that we might give thee notice: and we have written the names of the men that are the chief among them.

11 And they answered us in these words, saying: We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are building a temple that was built these many years ago, and which a great king of Israel built and set up.

12 But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven to wrath, he delivered them into the hands of Nabuchodonosor the king of Babylon the Chaldean: and he destroyed this house, and carried away the people to Babylon.

13 But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, king Cyrus set forth a decree, that this house of God should be built.

14 And the vessels also of gold and silver of the temple of God, which Nabuchodonosor had taken out of the temple, that was in Jerusalem, and had brought them to the temple of Babylon, king Cyrus brought out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to one Sassabasar, whom also he appointed governor,

15 And said to him: Take these vessels, and go, and put them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be built in its place.

16 Then came this same Sassabasar, and laid the foundations of the temple of God in Jerusalem, and from that time until now it is in building, and is not yet finished.

17 Now therefore if it seem good to the king, let him search in the king's library, which is in

Babylon, whether it hath been decreed by Cyrus the king, that the house of God in Jerusalem should be built, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

Chapter 6

Then king Darius gave orders, and they searched in the library of the books that were laid up in Babylon,

2 And there was found in Ecbatana, which is a castle in the province of Media, a book in which this record was written.

3 In the first year of Cyrus the king: Cyrus the king decreed, that the house of God should be built, which is in Jerusalem, in the place where they may offer sacrifices, and that they lay the foundations that may support the height of threescore cubits, and the breadth of threescore cubits,

4 Three rows of unpolished stones, and so rows of new timber: and the charges shall be given out of the king's house.

5 And also let the golden and silver vessels of the temple of God, which Nabuchodonosor took out of the temple of Jerusalem, and brought to Babylon, be restored, and carried back to the temple of Jerusalem to their place, which also were placed in the temple of God.

6 Now therefore Thathanai, governor of the country beyond the river, Stharbuzanai, and your counsellors the Apharsachites, who are beyond the river, depart far from them,

7 And let that temple of God be built by the governor of the Jews, and by their ancients, that they may build that house of God in its place.

8 I also have commanded what must be done by those ancients of the Jews, that the house of God may be built, to wit, that of the king's

chest, that is, of the tribute that is paid out of the country beyond the river, the charges be diligently given to those men, lest the work be hindered.

9 And if it shall be necessary, let calves also, and lambs, and kids, for holocausts to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the custom of the priests that are in Jerusalem, be given them day by day, that there be no complaint in any thing.

10 And let them offer oblations to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his children.

11 And I have made a decree: That if any whosoever, shall alter this commandment, a beam be taken from his house, and set up, and he be nailed upon it, and his house be confiscated.

12 And may the God, that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy all kingdoms, and the people that shall put out their hand to resist, and to destroy the house of God, that is in Jerusalem. I Darius have made the decree, which I will have diligently complied with.

13 So then Thathanai, governor of the country beyond the river, and Stharbuzanai, and his counsellors diligently executed what Darius the king had commanded.

14 And the ancients of the Jews built, and prospered according to the prophecy of Aggeus the prophet, and of Zacharias the son of Addo: and they built and finished, by the commandment of the God of Israel, and by the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes kings of the Persians.

15 And they were finishing this house of God, until the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of king Darius.

16 And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity kept the dedication of the house of God

with joy.

17 And they offered at the dedication of the house of God, a hundred calves, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and for a sin offering for all Israel twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses over the works of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And the children of Israel of the captivity kept the phase, on the fourteenth day of the first month.

20 For all the priests and the Levites were purified as one man: all were clean to kill the phase for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and themselves.

21 And the children of Israel that were returned from captivity, and all that had separated themselves from the filthiness of the nations of the earth to them, to seek the Lord the God of Israel, did eat.

22 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, that he should help their hands in the work of the house of the Lord the God of Israel.

Chapter 7

Now after these things in the reign of Artaxerxes king of the Persians, Esdras the son of Saraias, the son of Azarias, the son of Helcias,

2 The son of Sellum, the son of Sadoc, the son of Aчитob,

3 The son of Amarias, the son of Azarias, the son of Maraioth,

4 The son of Zarahias, the son of Ozi, the son of Bocci,

5 The son of Abisue, the son of Phinees, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest from the beginning.

6 This Esdras went up from Babylon, and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God had given to Israel: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.

7 And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the children of the priests, and of the children of the Levites, and of the singing men, and of the porters, and of the Nathinites to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.

8 And they came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, in the seventh year of the king.

9 For upon the first day of the first month he began to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem according to the good hand of his God upon him.

10 For Esdras had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do and to teach in Israel the commandments and judgment.

11 And this is the copy of the letter of the edict, which king Artaxerxes gave to Esdras the priest, the scribe instructed in the words and commandments of the Lord, and his ceremonies in Israel.

12 Artaxerxes king of kings to Esdras the priest, the most learned scribe of the law of the God of heaven, greeting.

13 It is decreed by me, that all they of the people of Israel, and of the priests and of the Levites in my realm, that are minded to go into Jerusalem, should go with thee.

14 For thou art sent from before the king, and his seven counsellors, to visit Judea and Jerusalem according to the law of thy God,