



Book
— **By** —
Book

OUR GOAL

To encourage you to read at least one book of the Bible each month so that you may:

- 1) better understand who God is and where you fit into his story
- 2) build a strong faith
- 3) face the future without fear

BIBLE STUDY METHOD

OBSERVATION

What does the text say?

INTERPRETATION

What does it mean?

APPLICATION

What did I learn that should affect my life?



ARE HELPS ALWAYS HELPFUL?

COMMENTARIES

When you read a commentary, keep in mind that you are reading the observations and conclusions of someone else's study and interpretation of scripture.



WARNING

It's always best to do your own study before consulting any commentary.

HISTORICAL FICTION

A literary genre in which a fictitious plot takes place in the setting of particular real historical events.



WARNING

When you read or watch historical fiction, it's critical to be able to sort out where the history ends and the fiction begins.

ALWAYS FACT CHECK



WARNING

There are many popular videos that present their interpretation as though they are actually quoting scripture.

A GOOD QUESTION TO ASK:



WARNING

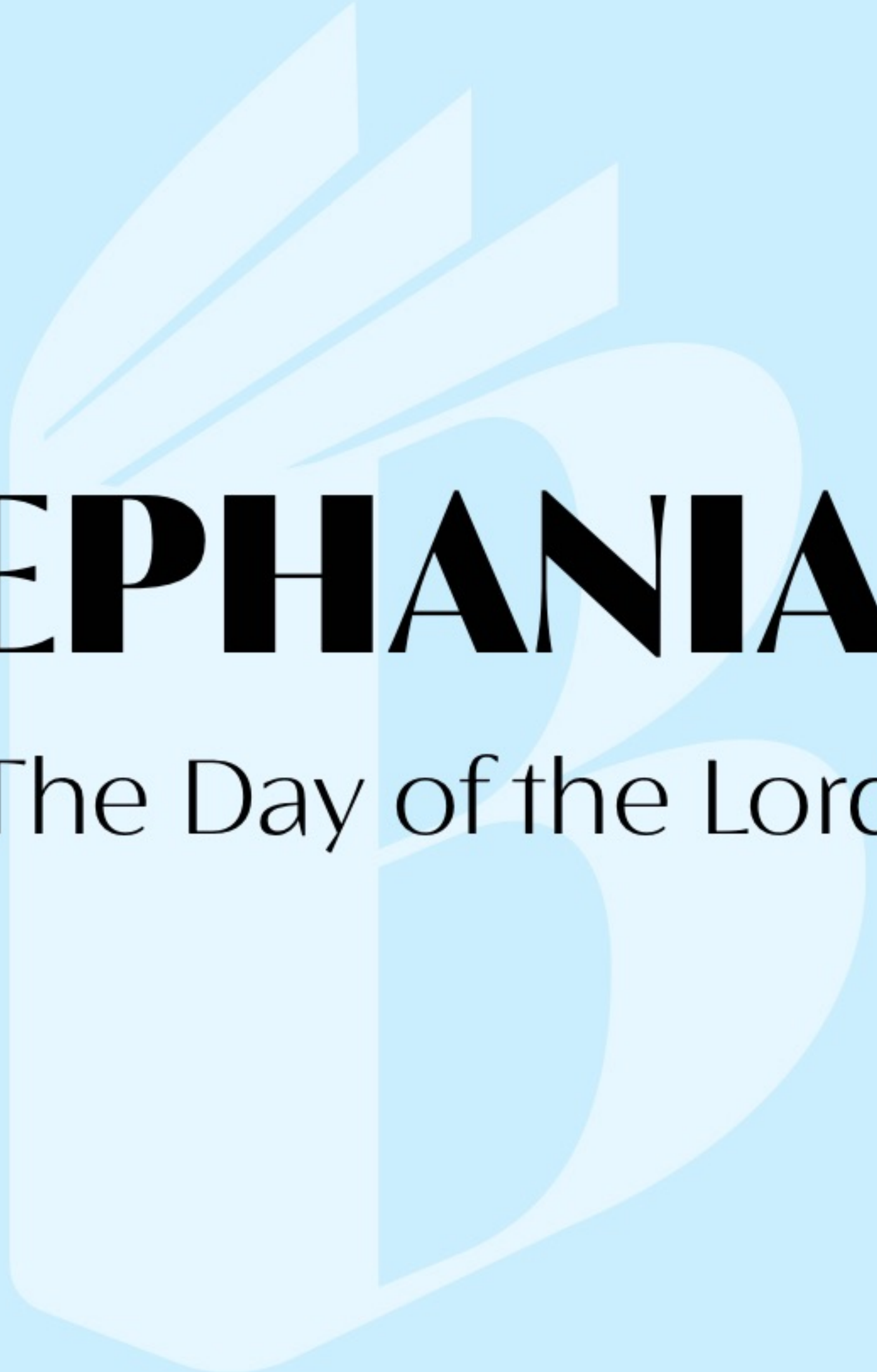
Does this video, article or book challenge me to read the actual Biblical account?

GROUP TALK

Are you presently fond of any particular video series that depicts Bible events?

Discuss what safeguards you have in place to ensure you are not mislead by fictitious fill-ins or misrepresentations of Biblical truth.





ZEPHANIAH

The Day of the Lord

ABOUT ZEPHANIAH

His name means “Jehovah Hides.”

THE ENEMY CANNOT HIDE YOU FROM GOD

I can never escape from your Spirit!

I can never get away from your presence!

If I go up to heaven, you are there;

if I go down to the grave, you are there.

Psalm 139:7-8

GOD CAN HIDE YOU FROM THE ENEMY

Seek the Lord [search diligently for Him and regard Him as the foremost necessity of your life], All you humble of the land Who have practiced His ordinances and have kept His commandments; Seek righteousness, seek humility [regard them as vital]. Perhaps you will be hidden [and pardoned and rescued] In the day of the Lord's anger.

Zephaniah 2:3 (AMP)

ABOUT ZEPHANIAH

His great-great-grandfather was Hezekiah.

Hezekiah

Amariah

Gedaliah

Cushi

Zephaniah

OTHER PROPHETS

Zephaniah was a contemporary of Jeremiah and Nahum.

ABOUT JOSIAH

King Josiah who was a grandson of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah
Manasseh
Amon
Josiah

ABOUT JOSIAH

He began to reign over Judah when he was 8 years old.

When he was 16, he began to seek the Lord.

When he was 20, he began destroying all the idols and shrines.

When he was 26, he ordered the reparation of the Temple. When the scrolls were discovered, he read and responded, leading the people to return to the Lord.

COMING JUDGMENT OF JUDAH

God will destroy every last trace of their Baal worship.

God will put an end to all the idolatrous priests.

GOD'S ACCUSATIONS

They bow down to the sun, moon, and stars.

They claim to follow the Lord, but then they worship Molech, too.

They don't worship God.

They no longer ask for the Lord's guidance or seek his blessings.

GOD'S ACCUSATIONS

They follow pagan customs.

They participate in pagan worship ceremonies.

They fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

They sit complacent in their sins.

WHAT THAT DAY WILL LOOK LIKE

Their property will be plundered.

Their homes will be ransacked.

Even strong men will cry out.

A day of terrible distress and anguish.

A day of ruin and desolation.

WHAT THAT DAY WILL LOOK LIKE

A day of darkness and gloom.

A day of clouds and blackness

A day of trumpet calls and battle cries

The walled cities and the strongest battlements
will go down.

The whole land will be devoured.

IS IT TOO LATE? (2:1-3)

Gather before judgment begins, before your time to repent is blown away like chaff.

Act now, before the fierce fury of the Lord falls and the terrible day of the Lord's anger begins.

Seek the Lord, all who are humble, and follow his commands.

IS IT TOO LATE? (2:1-3)

Seek to do what is right and live humbly.

Perhaps you will be hidden [and pardoned and rescued] in the day of the Lord's anger. (AMP)



The Surrounding Nations

TO THE WEST: PHILISTIA

(GAZA, ASHKELON, ASHDOD, AND AKRON)

The Lord will destroy you until not one of you is left.

The Philistine coast will become a wilderness pasture, a place of shepherd camps and enclosures for sheep and goats.

TO THE EAST: MOAB AND AMMON

They taunted, insulted and mocked God's people.

They invaded Israel's borders.

Moab and Ammon will be destroyed—destroyed as completely as Sodom and Gomorrah.

TO THE EAST: MOAB AND AMMON

They will receive the wages of their pride.

The Lord will terrify them as he destroys all the gods in the land.

TO THE SOUTH: ETHIOPA

You Ethiopians will be slaughtered by God's sword.

TO THE NORTH: ASSYRIA

The Lord will destroy the land of Assyria.

He will make its great capital, Nineveh, a desolate wasteland.

The proud city will become pasture for flocks and herds.

TO THE NORTH: ASSYRIA

It will become an utter ruin.

Everyone passing by will laugh in derision and shake a defiant fist.

JERUSALEM'S REBELLION (3:1-4)

It is a rebellious, polluted city of violence and crime.

No one can tell it anything; it refuses all correction.

It does not trust in the Lord or draw near to its God.

Its leaders are like roaring lions hunting for their victims.

JERUSALEM'S REBELLION (3:1-4)

Its judges are like ravenous wolves at evening time.

Its prophets are arrogant liars seeking their own gain.

Its priests defile the Temple by disobeying God's instructions.

They get up early to continue their evil deeds.

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

God will purify the speech of all people so that everyone can worship the Lord together.

You will no longer need to be ashamed, for you will no longer be rebels against me.

God will remove all proud and arrogant people from among you.

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

There will be no more haughtiness on my holy mountain.

Those who are left will be the lowly and humble, for it is they who trust in the name of the Lord.

The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will never tell lies or deceive one another.

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

They will eat and sleep in safety, and no one will make them afraid.

The Lord will remove his hand of judgment and disperse the armies of your enemy.

The Lord himself, the King of Israel, will live among you!

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

At last your troubles will be over, and you will never again fear disaster.

The announcement to Jerusalem will be, "Cheer up, Zion! Don't be afraid! For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior."

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

He will take delight in you with gladness.

With his love, he will calm all your fears.

He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.

You will be disgraced no more.

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

The Lord will deal severely with all who have oppressed you.

God will save the weak and helpless ones. I will bring together those who were chased away.

God will give glory and fame to his former exiles, wherever they have been mocked and shamed.

JERUSALEM'S REDEMPTION (3:9-20)

God will gather you together and bring you home again.

God will give you a good name, a name of distinction among all the nations of the earth.



The Time In Between

THE EXILE

Just as the prophets warned, Judah went into captivity. They were taken to Babylon in three phases:

605 B.C. – Among those taken were Daniel and friends

597 B.C. – Including Ezekiel and 10,000 captives

586 B.C. – All remaining and the temple was destroyed

THE RETURN

The return can also be divided into three phases:

536 B.C. – Zerubbabel returned and began rebuilding the temple

458 B.C. – Ezra returned with offerings and a decree from the king

445 B.C. – Nehemiah returned and rebuilt the wall

KING CYRUS

Isaiah prophecies about King Cyrus over 100 years before he was born.

¹³ I will raise up Cyrus to fulfill my righteous purpose, and I will guide his actions. He will restore my city and free my captive people— without seeking a reward! I, the Lord of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!”

Isaiah 45:13

KING CYRUS' DECREE

²“This is what King Cyrus of Persia says:

“The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build him a Temple at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Any of you who are his people may go to Jerusalem in Judah to rebuild this Temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, who lives in Jerusalem. And may your God be with you! ⁴ Wherever this Jewish remnant is found, let their neighbors contribute toward their expenses by giving them silver and gold, supplies for the journey, and livestock, as well as a voluntary offering for the Temple of God in Jerusalem.”

Ezra 1:2-4

ZERUBBABEL

Zerubbabel was the grandson of King Jehoichin of Judah and thus a descendant of David (1 Chronicles 3:17).

Zerubbabel is listed in the Bible as an ancestor of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:12-13; Luke 3:27).

ZERUBBABEL

Born in Babylon during the exile, Zerubbabel traveled to Judah after King Cyrus II allowed the Judean captives to return to their homeland to rebuild the temple.
(Ezra 1:1-4; 6:3-5; 8-10).

The prophet Haggai identifies Zerubbabel as the governor of Judah after the exile (Haggai 1:1; 2:2,21).

JESHUA (AKA JOSHUA)

The son of Jehozadak, the high priest” (Haggai 1:1).

Joshua helped rebuild the temple (Ezra 5:1-2).

The first high priest in the rebuilt Jerusalem

WHEN THEY ARRIVED...

In early autumn, when the Israelites had settled in their towns, all the people assembled in Jerusalem with a unified purpose. ² Then Jeshua son of Jehozadak joined his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his family in rebuilding the altar of the God of Israel. They wanted to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, as instructed in the Law of Moses, the man of God.

Ezra 3:1-2

ALSO...

They celebrated the Feast of Booths (Ezra 3:4-5)

They set up masons and carpenters in preparation for construction. (Ezra 3:7)



About 2 years later...

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

In the second month of the second year, they began the work.
(Ezra 3:8)

And the foundation was laid, which caused a lot of noise
(Ezra 3:10-13)

This stirred up the enemy.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

The enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were rebuilding a Temple to the Lord, the God of Israel. ² So they approached Zerubbabel and the other leaders and said, “Let us build with you, for we worship your God just as you do. We have sacrificed to him ever since King Esarhaddon of Assyria brought us here.”

Ezra 4:1-2

SENDING “COUNSELORS”

Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Ezra 4:4-5 (NASB)



KING #2

KING ARTAXERXES

The enemies (Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest) wrote to Artaxerxes, accusing the Jews of being a rebellious people, and posing a threat to the king if they are allowed to rebuild.

Ezra 4:7-16

IT WORKED..

²⁴ So the work on the Temple of God in Jerusalem had stopped, and it remained at a standstill until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.
Ezra 4:24

A large, light blue, stylized number '6' is positioned in the background, centered vertically and horizontally. It has a modern, rounded design with a thick stroke.

About 14 years later...

ENTER HAGGAI

On August 29 of the second year of King Darius's reign, the Lord gave a message through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

“This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: The people are saying, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.’”

Haggai 1:1-2

HAGGAI'S MESSAGE

Maybe you should consider why....

Why is it that you have planted much but harvest little?

You eat but are not satisfied.

You drink but are still thirsty.

You put on clothes but cannot keep warm.

Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes.

HAGGAI'S MESSAGE

“This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies says: Look at what’s happening to you! Now go up into the hills, bring down timber, and rebuild my house. Then I will take pleasure in it and be honored, says the Lord.”

Haggai 1:7-8

THE PEOPLE RESPOND

Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of God's people began to obey the message from the Lord their God. When they heard the words of the prophet Haggai, whom the Lord their God had sent, the people feared the Lord.

Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave the people this message from the Lord: "I am with you, says the Lord!"

Haggai 1:12-13

KING #3 — KING DARIUS

Darius I ruled Persia from about 521 to 486 BC.

A different kind of ruler, he respected local religions, customs, and laws of conquered peoples.

TATTENAI, THE TATTLE-TALE

“To King Darius. Greetings.

⁸“The king should know that we went to the construction site of the Temple of the great God in the province of Judah. It is being rebuilt with specially prepared stones, and timber is being laid in its walls. The work is going forward with great energy and success.

⁹“We asked the leaders, ‘Who gave you permission to rebuild this Temple and restore this structure?’ ¹⁰And we demanded their names so that we could tell you who the leaders were.

Ezra 5:7-9

THEY DID NOT STOP

⁵ But because their God was watching over them, the leaders of the Jews were not prevented from building until a report was sent to Darius and he returned his decision.

Ezra 5:5

THE FORMER TEMPLE

Does anyone remember this house—this Temple—in its former splendor? How, in comparison, does it look to you now? It must seem like nothing at all! But now the Lord says: Be strong, Zerubbabel. Be strong, Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people still left in the land. And now get to work, for I am with you says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. My Spirit remains among you, just as I promised when you came out of Egypt. So do not be afraid."

Haggai 2:3-5

FUTURE JUDGEMENT & GLORY

“For this is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies says: In just a little while I will again shake the heavens and the earth, the oceans and the dry land. I will shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will be brought to this Temple. I will fill this place with glory, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

The future glory of this Temple will be greater than its past glory, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies. And in this place I will bring peace. I, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies have spoken.

Haggai 2:6-7;9

ABOUT DECEMBER 18

“Think about this eighteenth day of December, the day when the foundation of the Lord’s Temple was laid. Think carefully. I am giving you a promise now while the seed is still in the barn. You have not yet harvested your grain, and your grapevines, fig trees, pomegranates, and olive trees have not yet produced their crops. But from this day onward I will bless you.

Haggai 2:18-19

THE KING'S ANSWER

So King Darius sent this message:

“Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the province west of the Euphrates River, and Shethar-bozenai, and your colleagues and other officials west of the Euphrates River—stay away from there! ⁷ Do not disturb the construction of the Temple of God. Let it be rebuilt on its original site, and do not hinder the governor of Judah and the elders of the Jews in their work.

⁸“Moreover, I hereby decree that you are to help these elders of the Jews as they rebuild this Temple of God. You must pay the full construction costs, without delay, from my taxes collected in the province west of the Euphrates River so that the work will not be interrupted.

⁹“Give the priests in Jerusalem whatever is needed in the way of young bulls, rams, and male lambs for the burnt offerings presented to the God of heaven. And without fail, provide them with as much wheat, salt, wine, and olive oil as they need each day. ¹⁰ Then they will be able to offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the welfare of the king and his sons.

¹¹ “Those who violate this decree in any way will have a beam pulled from their house. Then they will be lifted up and impaled on it, and their house will be reduced to a pile of rubble. ¹² May the God who has chosen the city of Jerusalem as the place to honor his name destroy any king or nation that violates this command and destroys this Temple.

“I, Darius, have issued this decree. Let it be obeyed with all diligence.”

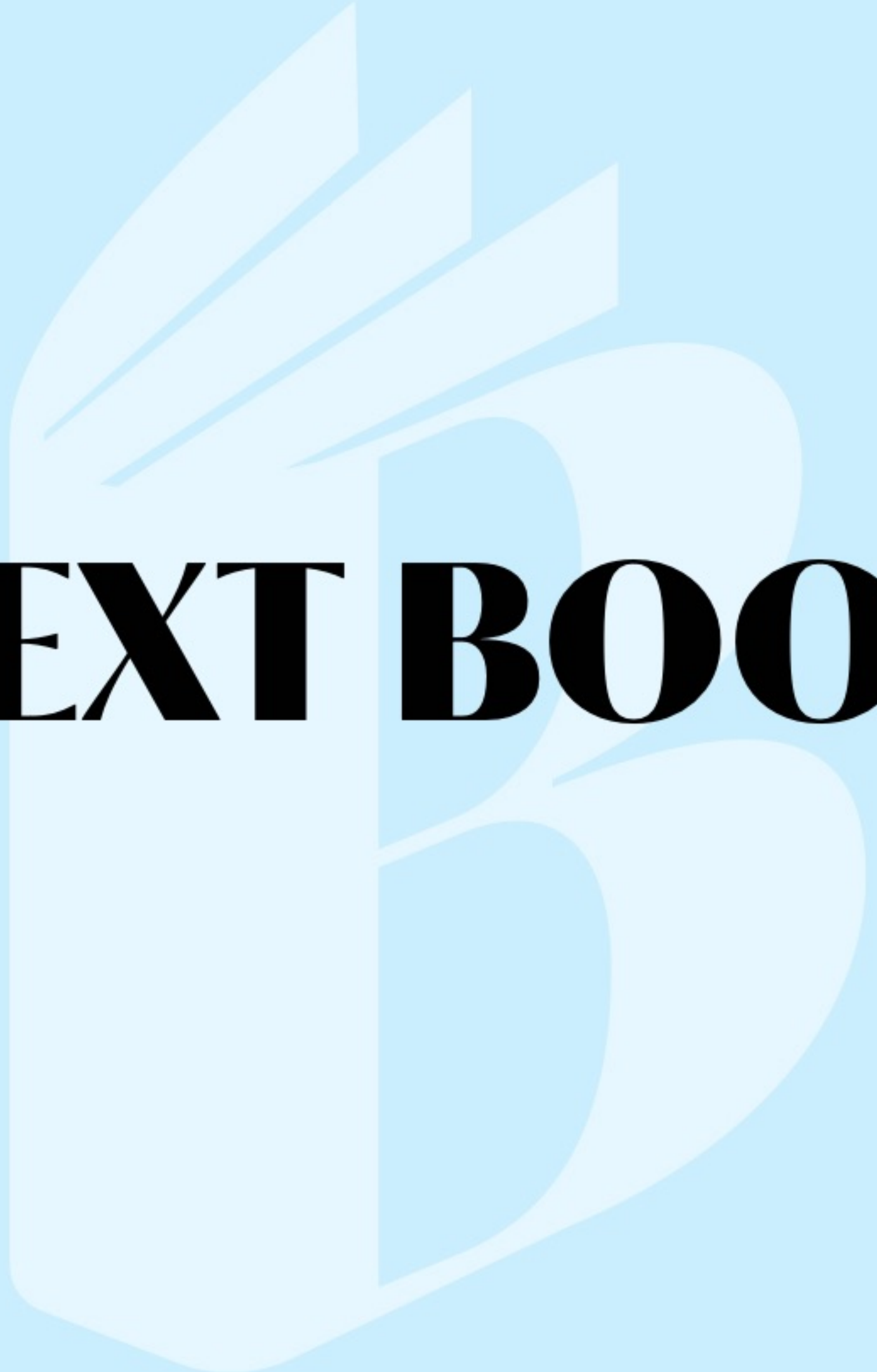
Ezra 6:6-12

WHAT HAPPENED?

Tattenai, governor of the province west of the Euphrates River, and Shetharbozenai and their colleagues complied at once with the command of King Darius. So the Jewish elders continued their work, and they were greatly encouraged by the preaching of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo.

The temple was finally finished, as had been commanded by the God of Israel and decreed by Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, the kings of Persia. The Temple was completed on March 12, during the sixth year of King Darius's reign.

Ezra 6:13-15



NEXT BOOK



ZECHARIAH

THE COMING MESSIAH, SAVIOR, & KING

GOAL FOR THIS MONTH

Read the book of Zechariah
(14 chapters.)

As you follow the handout, be sure to make notes of any insights you gain as you read and study along with any questions you encounter.

PREVIOUS NOTES

newspring.org/bbb



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