

Second Temple Period

The Second Temple Period refers to the general time period during which the Second Temple existed. This temple was built under the direction of Zerubbabel during the prophetic ministry of Haggai and Zechariah. Thus it is Zerubbabel that is credited as its builder although the biblical account lists Jeshua, the son of Jozadak as taking an equal part in the building, and it is clear that the prophets of God played an integral part in its construction.¹ It was completed in approximately 516 B.C.E. during the sixth year of King Darius' reign.²

In 17 B.C.E., King Herod undertook to rebuild, or rather restore and improve, the Temple of Zerubbabel. It is this temple which existed during the time of Hillel and Jesus and which was completely destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E., bringing to an end the Second Temple Period and all temple worship among the Jews. Therefore the Second Temple Period covers a time period of about 590 years from 516 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.

¹ Ezra 5:2

² Ezra 6:15-16