

# God Restores His People

God restores us to Himself on His own terms, which will always include repentance and obedience.



**GOD'S STORY**  
THE TRANSFORMATION FOR ADULT LIFEGROUPS

**Ezra 3:1-11; 6:19-22**

**August 30, 2020**

(Ezra 3:1-11) <sup>1</sup> When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled together as one in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> Then Joshua son of Jozadak and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. <sup>3</sup> Despite their fear of the peoples around them, they built the altar on its foundation and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the Lord, both the morning and evening sacrifices. <sup>4</sup> Then in accordance with what is written, they celebrated the Festival of Tabernacles with the required number of burnt offerings prescribed for each day. <sup>5</sup> After that, they presented the regular burnt offerings, the New Moon sacrifices and the sacrifices for all the appointed sacred festivals of the Lord, as well as those brought as freewill offerings to the Lord. <sup>6</sup> On the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, though the foundation of the Lord's temple had not yet been laid. <sup>7</sup> Then they gave money to the masons and carpenters, and gave food and drink and olive oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre, so that they would bring cedar logs by sea from Lebanon to Joppa, as authorized by Cyrus king of Persia. <sup>8</sup> In the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak and the rest of the people (the priests and the Levites and all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem) began the work. They appointed Levites twenty years old and older to supervise the building of the house of the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Joshua and his sons and brothers and Kadmiel and his sons (descendants of Hodaviah and the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers—all Levites—joined together in supervising those working on the house of God. <sup>10</sup> When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the Lord, as prescribed by David king of Israel. <sup>11</sup> With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord: "He is good; his love toward Israel endures forever." And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.

(Ezra 6:19-22) <sup>19</sup> On the fourteenth day of the first month, the exiles celebrated the Passover. <sup>20</sup> The priests and Levites had purified themselves and were all ceremonially clean. The Levites slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the exiles, for their relatives the priests and for themselves. <sup>21</sup> So the Israelites who had returned from the exile ate it, together with all who had separated themselves from the unclean practices of their Gentile neighbors in order to seek the Lord, the God of Israel. <sup>22</sup> For seven days they celebrated with joy the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because the Lord had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria so that he assisted them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.

## COMMUNITY – CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER

- Are you more of a fixer-upper type person, or do you prefer new things?
- Have you ever restored something, such as piece of furniture or a piece of clothing? Describe the commitment that was required to bring it back to life.

## CONTENT – EXPLORING GOD'S STORY

Have a volunteer read Ezra 3:1-7

- What makes community and unity so important when tackling group projects? How does worshipping God unify people?
- What conclusions can we make about the Jews' repentance and worship by observing their obedience of Mosaic law? How can obedience motivate a believer to give out of pure gratitude to God?
- How do the actions taken in this passage speak into how we approach worship today?

Have a volunteer read Ezra 3:10-11

- Who got all the credit when the foundation of the temple was complete? What lessons can we learn from that for our worship today?
- What things do you consider to be the foundations of worship in our church? Why?

Have a volunteer read Ezra 6:19-22

- What things can we do to spiritually prepare ourselves to worship the one, true God?
- How does the joy expressed in these restored festivals foreshadow the joy we have through faith in Christ?
- What are some ways you can express joy and gratitude to God for providing salvation in Jesus Christ?

### COMMISSION – ENGAGING IN GOD'S STORY

- What has God done through Christ to restore you to Himself? Do you believe this?
- Is your personal worship of God a joyful experience for you? What steps can you take to better experience and express your joy in Christ in your personal worship?
- Are our corporate worship experiences joy-filled? What needs to take place to increase the joy expressed in our worship?

**PRAYER:** Close in prayer, asking God to prepare your hearts for worship and to remove any obstacles that keep you from fully worshiping Him as individuals and when you enter into corporate worship each week.

### CONTINUE TO JOURNEY THROUGH GOD'S STORY

Bible Reading Plan:

DAY 1 – Zechariah 1:1-6, 2, 12  
 DAY 2 – Ezra 7-8  
 DAY 3 – Ezra 9-10  
 DAY 4 – Esther 1-2  
 DAY 5 – Esther 3-4

KEY VERSE: Esther 4:14

H.E.A.R. Method:

Highlight a verse or two.  
 Explain what the text means.  
 Apply the verse to your life.  
 Respond to God.

Our team has put together Bible study resources to encourage and inspire you as you engage in God's Story. Visit [chetscreek.com/gods-story](http://chetscreek.com/gods-story) for videos, study guides, and more.

#### OUR VISION

To be a church  
 for the unchurched,  
 here and around the world.

#### ADULT LIFEGROUPS

Gospel-centered communities that aim to KNOW  
 GOD together and BE CHANGED by Him in a  
 way that will CHANGE THE WORLD.