

Laying the Foundation Ezra 3

I. Gathering for Worship – 3:1-3

1. Pilgrims settled in their towns – 2:70
The towns that were given to them under Joshua
Families had to rebuild after they arrived in Israel
Time was taken to get rest & reestablished as families
2. Time was set to gather in Jerusalem - 3:1
Seventh month - time to gather for worship
A month in the Mosaic Covenant to gather for worship
1st of month was Feast of Trumpets – Lev. 23:23-25
10th of month was Day of atonement – Lev. 23:26-32
15th day was Feast of Tabernacles – Lev. 23:33-44
3. True return must mean a return to God
They gathered as one man in Jerusalem – 1
There was a spirit of unity as they resumed worship
4. Rebuilt the altar of the God of Israel – 2
Priests under Jeshua took lead in rebuilding the altar
Zerubbabel & his men were in support of the priests
It marked a new commitment to the God of Israel
Renewed commitment to worship as given by Moses
5. Worship was resumed – 3
Even before the temple was built they worshipped
Burnt offerings were offered to God morning & evening
Burnt offerings were freewill offerings of worship
Lev. 1:2-3
Acknowledged their need for God & His protection
There was fear of the people around them

II. Celebrating God's Feasts – 3:4-7

1. Feast of Tabernacles was observed in worship – 4
Lived in booths as it was written in the Law
True worship means obedience to God's Word
Sacrifices offered to God as required in the Law
2. Continued worship at new moons & other feasts – 5-6
Worship included gifts as freewill offerings
From the 1st day of 7th month worship continued
Even though foundation of Temple was not yet laid
3. Gifts were given to provide for the new Temple - 7
Got workers & material from same source of Solomon

III. Temple Foundation is laid – 3:8-13

1. Time the work began – 3:8
In 2nd year after arrival in 2nd month of the year
Same month when Solomon began 1st Temple
1 Kings 6:1
2. Priests & Levites led in organizing workers – 8-9
Jeshua the High Priest took the lead
3. Foundation was laid with worship & praise – 10-11
Levites & sons of Asaph with cymbals praised God
In accordance with directions given by King David
They sang responsively giving thanks to the Lord
“For He is good, His steadfast love endures forever
toward Israel”
4. All the people of Israel shouted in praise – 11

They praised the Lord that the foundation was laid
5. Shouts of joy were mixed with weeping
Many who saw 1st Temple wept with a loud voice
Prophet Zechariah spoke words of encouragement
to them - Zech. 4:8-10
Prophet Haggai also spoke words of encouragement
Hag. 2:3-9
Shouts of the people were heard a long way off