

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Ezra 3

First Things First

Getting Started

What helps you to be thankful?

Background

God led Cyrus, King of Persia, to issue a decree in 538 BC that allowed the Jewish exiles to return to Palestine. Almost 50,000 Israelites made the journey.

Digging In

1. **Read Ezra 3:1-6.** After settling in their towns, what was the first priority for the exiles that returned from captivity in Babylon?
2. Why did it take courage for them to do this? (2 Kings 17:24-40)
3. Why would this have created a challenge for the Jewish returnees as they reestablished the worship of the LORD?
4. What was the original purpose of the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles)? (see Lev 23:39-43)
5. How was the situation of the exiles like that of the Israelites who first celebrated the Feast of Booths?
6. **Read Ezra 3:7-13.** What was their next task?
7. How was this like the building of Solomon's temple? (2 Chron 2:1-10)
8. Who all was involved in the work? How does this show a unity of purpose?
9. As the foundation was laid, the people responded in two very different ways. Why do you think that was?
10. Why do you think it was so important for the exiles to rebuild the altar and the temple?



Getting Personal

- How has God made it possible for us to worship him today?
- One definition of worship is *to honor with extravagant love and extreme submission* (Webster's Dictionary, 1828). According to this definition, how well do you worship?
- Where is God on your list of priorities?