

Now4Next:

Preparing God's House for Future Generations

Ezra 3:1

1 In early autumn, when the Israelites had settled in their towns, all the people assembled in Jerusalem with a unified purpose.

UNIFIED PURPOSE

Psalm 133:1-2

¹Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! ²It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes!

Ezra 3:2

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.

Ezra 3:8-9

⁸ The construction of the Temple of God began in midspring, during the second year after they arrived in Jerusalem. The work force was made up of everyone who had returned from exile, including Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jehozadak and his fellow priests, and all the Levites. The Levites who were twenty years old or older were put in charge of rebuilding the Lord's Temple. ⁹ The workers at the Temple of God were supervised by Jeshua with his sons and relatives, and Kadmiel and his sons, all descendants of Hodaviah. They were helped in this task by the Levites of the family of Henadad.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Joshua 24:15

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Ezra 3:2b-3

They wanted to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, as instructed in the Law of Moses, the man of God. ³Even though the people were afraid of the local residents, they rebuilt the altar at its old site. Then they began to sacrifice burnt offerings on the altar to the Lord each morning and evening.

EXPECT OPPOSITION

Ephesians 6:12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ezra 3:4-6

⁴ They celebrated the Festival of Shelters as prescribed in the Law, sacrificing the number of burnt offerings specified for each day of the festival. ⁵ They also offered the regular burnt offerings and the offerings required for the new moon celebrations and the annual festivals as prescribed by the Lord. The people also gave voluntary offerings to the Lord. ⁶ Fifteen days before the Festival of Shelters began, the priests had begun to sacrifice burnt offerings to the Lord. This was even before they had started to lay the foundation of the Lord's Temple.

WILLING GENEROSITY

Ezra 3:10-11

¹⁰ When the builders completed the foundation of the Lord's Temple, the priests put on their robes and took their places to blow their trumpets. And the Levites, descendants of Asaph, clashed their cymbals to praise the Lord, just as King David had prescribed. ¹¹ With praise and thanks, they sang this song to the Lord: "He is so good! His faithful love for Israel endures forever!" Then all the people gave a great shout, praising the Lord because the foundation of the Lord's Temple had been laid.

PASSIONATE WORSHIP

Ezra 3:12-13

¹² But many of the older priests, Levites, and other leaders who had seen the first Temple wept aloud when they saw the new Temple's foundation. The others, however, were shouting for joy. ¹³ The joyful shouting and weeping mingled together in a loud noise that could be heard far in the distance.

RESTORED DESTINY

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Isaiah 58:12

And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

Acts 3:11

¹¹ Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch, which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

Acts 5:12

¹² And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

NEXT RIGHT STEPS///

- 1. Ask the Holy Spirit to be specific concerning your offering.**
- 2. Bring your offering on Sunday, August 27.**