

Welcome / prayer

Second – there's little left to 'chance' when God enters the picture in your life.

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

prepared = fit up in advance

What good works?

Does God know there are specific things you are supposed to be doing right now? Indeed!

Do YOU know what those things are?

Consider how conquered the Israelites were. There was zero hope. 70y might as well go on forever.

Yet before they were even taken captive, God prescribed a method for punishment, a time for punishment, and a deliverer BY NAME, in an impossible situation.

Does it matter how great or impossible your dream is?

Onward to Chapter 2

- Ezra 1 discussed the decree of King Cyrus that allowed the people of Judah to return to their homeland and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 2 is a detailed accounting of all the individuals who chose to return to Judah, numbered by their father's houses.
- Ezra is a scribe so you can be sure there will be at least one chapter with nothing but accountings of names & numbers

The total company consisted of 49,897 people (42,360 Israelites, 7,337 servants, and 200 singers).

Ezra 2: 64 The whole assembly numbered 42,360, 65 besides their male and female servants who numbered 7,337; and they had 200 singing men and women.

Roughly 10% of them were of the tribe of levi, important for setting up temple

You have priests, levites, singers, gate-keepers, temple servants etc

Quiz question – diff between a priest and a levite?

Nu 3:10 "So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood, but the layman who comes near shall be put to death."

- All priests are Levites,
- But only Aaron's descendents are priests.

Jacob → Levi → Kohath → Amram → Moses/Aaron

Gatekeepers – what are those, what are they for?

- Literally 'porter' or doorkeeper
- What does the doorkeeper do?
- open/closing gates on rotating shifts
- ensuring only those ritually clean could come in

Le 10:9 "Do not drink wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that you will not die--it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations--**10** and so as to make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean,**11** and so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses."

Gatekeepers were Levites so the above passage does fit even for them, regarding the need to discern

1Ch 9:17 Now the gatekeepers *were* Shallum and Akkub and Talmon and Ahiman and their relatives (Shallum the chief **18** *being stationed* until now at the king's gate to the east). These *were* the gatekeepers for the camp of the sons of Levi.

Is there a need for a gatekeeper today?

What is /would be his role?

What is modern gatekeeping?

- In the corporeal realm – ushering, greeters, security
- In the spiritual realm – pastors, teachers, elders

Are all board members elders?

Are all elders board members?