

A Renewed Remnant

Lesson 3

The Altar Is Reconstructed & The Temple Foundation Is Laid (Ezra 3)

Introduction

Having settled in their villages (2:70), the remnant Jews begin to do what they came back for...rebuild the means needed to restore proper worship of God. This involved the altar and, most importantly, the temple. On the very spot where Solomon's temple once stood (2:68), they will now erect its replacement. Once again, they will be able to call upon Jehovah and give Him the worship demanded by the Law...worship that had been stopped at this place for almost half a century because of sin.

- 1) What is the time element given in v. 1? [*Note: this is important re: the Jewish calendar.*]

- 2) What was the first thing Zerubbabel & Jeshua did? (vv. 2-3) What "preparations" had already been made for this effort? (1:7-11; 2:68-69)

- 3) What conditions in post-exilic Jerusalem had a negative impact on the remnant and their efforts to rebuild the temple? (v. 3a)

- 4) What is mentioned in v. 4? (cp. v. 1) Research question: find out what you can re: this feast (*when, why, how, purpose, etc.*)

- 5) What statements do you find – once in v. 2 and twice in v. 4 – that strongly suggest the "guidance" these Jews were using in their initial efforts to restore their worship?

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- 6) What else was “restored?” (vv. 5-6a) However, was still lacking? (v. 6b)

- 7) What efforts were made re: beginning to rebuild the temple? (v. 7)

- 8) What “event” is recorded in vv. 8-11? About how long has it been since the altar was rebuilt? What description does Ezra give of what took place? *Thought question*: what did this foundation really represent?

- 9) Similar to the references to the word of God (*Question 5* – vv. 2, 4), what other “precedent” does Ezra mention in v. 10? Find out what you can about this also.

- 10) What else happened on the day the temple foundation was laid? (vv. 12-13) This “reaction” serves as a reminder of what painful truth?