

## Restoration and Renewal Ezra 2 & 3

Harold Ross started The New Yorker magazine years ago in small offices, with little equipment.

A) One day in a restaurant downstairs he met Dorothy Parker, one of the magazine's first writers.

**“What are you doing down here?” he asked.  
“Why aren't you upstairs working?”**

B) She replied - “Somebody else was using the pencil, “so I came down for some coffee.”

1) Talk about Humble beginnings

C) From such humble beginnings, The New Yorker has become a famous & widely circulated magazine.

D) Point of the Story: Almost everything great had a small beginning. You've got to start somewhere!

**The Book of Ezra is another example of that – it is about New Beginnings**

A) God's people – because of Idolatry - Rebellion – Invaded by the Babylonians - Jeremiah prophesied – 70 yrs of captivity

B) 605 BC Nebuchadnezzar – takes Captives taken to Babylon. – 1) 20 yrs later another Babylonian invasion – left the temple destroyed – city was left in ruins

C) 10's of thousands taken captive into Babylon. After 70 yrs Persia is now the World Empire - God moves on the heart of Cyrus the king of Persia.

A) Let the people of Israel go back – rebuild their temple and their city!

B) Fulfilling a prophecy by Isaiah Prophesied 150 yrs before Cyrus was even born – God names him.

1) Cyrus would be the one – issues the decree for the people of Israel to go back – **“My Shepherd”**

C) Cyrus issues the decree – and a man by the name of Zerubbabel steps forward to lead the charge.

1) His name – **Stranger in Babylon** – Unique name – parents – this place is not your home.

D) The invitation goes out – Saw last week the end of Ch.1 that 49,697 people respond –

1) At first that seems like a large number but –

E) Compared to the larger number of Jewish people living in the Persian empire – really small.

### CH.2 Begins

**Now these are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his own city.**

**God is the God of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance – Jonah – Rebellion – Fish – Barfed on the beach.**

A) Then we read - the word of the Lord came to **Jonah a 2<sup>nd</sup> time.**

B) Then you have in the NT – Peter – Boasting – Denial – His heart break

1) HIS 2<sup>ND</sup> CHANCE!

C) The Book of Ezra is an Example of God giving the people of Israel a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance – Go back to their homeland – Start over!

### As we come to Ezra Chapter 2

A) Average reader – wonders why is this list of unpronounceable names in the Bible?

B) Here is something that might surprise you – this list is repeated again in Nehemiah 7 – **so it is found 2x in the Bible.**

C) Purpose? **Ideas for Baby names** – V48 Gazzam? Nice ring to it – Shazzam

1) Or how about Shephatiah v.4 – Good cooks

D) Interesting names: V.3 people of Parosh – Fleas

1) V.5 Arah = Wild OX

2) V.19 Hashum = Large nose

**There was a Practical reason for this list as well as a Spiritual reason.**

A) **Practical reason:** It was important to legitimize their heritage in order for them to reclaim their land.

B) They had to be able to trace their lineage – what family they belonged to.

1) Land issued by family or name

C) So it was practical for the reclaiming of their land.

**Think of it is this way: Suppose part of San Diego was hit by a Nuclear weapon Part of downtown was wiped out**

A) And because of Radiation everyone living this side of Camp Pendleton had to evacuate.

B) Some go east to Arizona / some go South down into Mexico /

1) Others head north So Cal / No Cal / Northwest

C) All of San Diego is quarantined for 50 yrs –

**After 50 yrs those who want to can come back – come relocate – come back to what is left of their homes**

A) Land Records for ownership would be important.

B) My family – Rob and Denise Long gone – Dead

C) Amanda / Scott – Aaron / Brooklyn – Amy her husband – all come back – Kids grand kids

**D) Something proving ownership would be very important**

1) That is the scene here – This list would be important for that reason as well

E) So that is the Practical reason for this list

**Spiritual Reason:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reminds us people are important to God so much so that he records names – not #'s**

A) Not multitudes/ but names/ families

B) Valentines – Not a one – Not a one

C) Most important list of names is the lambs book of life.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reminds us that God has a chosen people.**

A) God chose Israel (those descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) to be His people.

B) As Moses told the Israelites, (Deut. 7:6). “For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

C) Israel has always been – Special – but Moses goes on to tell them that it was not because of anything special in them or what that they did **But rather because of God’s sovereign oath to their forefathers.**

A) Then he says, “Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; <sup>10</sup> and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. (Deut. 7:9-10a).

B) Those verses are foundational to understanding why we have this list of names in Ezra 2.

C) Ancestry was essential to being a Jew and being a Jew was essential to being a part of the covenant nation.

**By the time we get to the New Testament, the Jews had taken their ancestry too far.**

A) It led them into pride with regard to the Gentiles and to the false notion that a birth pedigree was sufficient for right standing with God.

B) But John the Baptist confronted them: “**Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’ for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham**” (Luke 3:8).

C) As Jesus told Nicodemus, the important birth is not being born a Jew physically, 1) but being born again spiritually through faith in Jesus Christ

**D) Paul makes the same point, that it is those who are of the faith of Abraham who are his true children**

1) True Circumcision – Heart -  
(Rom. 4:13-16; 9:6-8; Gal. 3:29).

E) So those are the practical and Spiritual reasons for this list!

**This list of names is broken down into the following divisions**

A) Leaders (V. 2); Zerubbabel! Jeshua the priest – Nehemiah – Different – Mordecai – different

B) Every good leader needs solid men around him he can count on.

1) Thankful for our guys here – Love the body

C) All our guys here wear multiple hats.

1) I oversee Marriage and Family / Staff / our Equip School and until recently – Missions.

D) Steve oversees Men's, Home groups, All the Building stuff – Day to Day staff issues

1) Eddie – Payroll - Finances, Sound, Tech,

E) Jamie – Graphics and Shadowridge Campus

1) A lot of Churches – Guys do one thing – these guys work hard!

So Ezra starts with the Leaders

**Families & Towns (3-35);**

**Interesting to me – that many number in the 100's some in the thousands but there are a few that were relatively small**

A) V.16 Family of Ater = 98 /

- V. 22 The men of Netophah = 56
- V. 24 The men of Azma/veth = 42
- V. 29 The people of Nebo = 52

B) I point that out for two reasons – these guys were willing to go – small in number

C) Might have Lacked support but they were still willing

D) Also because I think it reminds us that in God's economy – He doesn't place a greater importance on greater numbers.

E) He doesn't ignore the Group with only 42

1) Don't despise the day of small things!

**Families & Towns (v.3-35); Priests (v.36-39); Levites (v.40) Only 74; Singers (v.41) only 28;**

Temple Helpers (v.42-54); Solomon's Servants (v.55-58); Those who couldn't identify their genealogy (v.59-63).

**That last group is really interesting because if they couldn't prove their Heritage they couldn't serve in their calling.**

A) The priest didn't have an allotment of land –

B) They were not able to own property – they were provided for by the Lord.

C) So these men – had no assurance that they were going to be able to serve – or have a place to live – and they come anyway.

C) So refreshing – today: Run into so many that before they are willing to serve the Lord they want everything spelled out and dialed in.

D) Miss out on this incredible opportunity to live by faith.

**One of the things that Marked the Jesus People movement FAITH**

A) Reckless but also exciting – willingness to go anywhere and do anything –

B) Saw God do amazing things

C) Don't see that too much any more. Daniel and Amber.

D) I Find these guys to be inspiring

1) What Risk am I willing to take for JESUS

E) Zerubbabel was going to rely on the V.63

Urim and Thummin – Rocks Colored –

1) God Some how directed

**As we move into Chapter 3 – Restoration and Renewal begins**

A) We gain some insight into what happens in a heart – in a family – Church – community – Nation

B) When Spiritual Restoration and Renewal is happening

C) See, Spiritual Restoration and Renewal is going to involve Commitment.

**Think about what these people did:**

A) They gave up their comfortable and familiar surroundings

B) Traveled 900 miles – walking through a barren and hostile desert

1) To go to a city that had been devastated by war

C) That wasn't convenient – and it took commitment!

### Insight into what they were committed to in Ch.3 1<sup>s</sup> – Committed to Theology V.1-6

And when the seventh month had come, and the children of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as *it is* written in the Law of Moses the man of God. <sup>3</sup> Though fear *had come* upon them because of the people of those countries, they set the altar on its bases; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, *both* the morning and evening burnt offerings. <sup>4</sup> They also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as *it is* written, and *offered* the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. <sup>5</sup> Afterwards *they offered* the regular burnt offering, and *those* for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and *those* of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the LORD. <sup>6</sup> From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, although the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid.

The first thing that the leaders did when they saw the pile of rubble where the Temple once stood was to rebuild the altar (Ezra 3:2).

A) Why did they begin with the altar?

B) Because our fundamental need, if we want to draw near to God, is forgiveness of our sins.

C) Without the Shedding of Blood – there is no remission of sins

1) Concerning the altar, God had said, “I will meet there with the sons of Israel ...”

D) Huge part of their Theology centered around an Altar – and Sacrifice

1) Passover Lamb – Egypt –

An altar was Central to their THEOLOGY – and it as a prefigured – that which is central to our THEOLOGY – A CROSS!!

A) Any time true Spiritual Restoration and Renewal takes place – the Cross will be the focus.

B) Getting back to the realization that Sin separates

1) God rescued – Cross is central

C) Theology that starts with what God did and not what we need to do.

D) Theology – Not self focused but God focused

1) Everything is in Response to him

Spiritual Renewal in your life – Family – Church Community – Nation – Back to Calvary Chapel

A) Sinner in need of Savior – Wretch – Mess

B) Jesus did it all

C) Responding to that!

V.3 is interesting: There was a looming threat of their enemies

A) Many would have been prone to establish an Army first –

B) But these men knew that confidence in man is vain

1) Seek first the Kingdom and His Righteousness and everything else would fall into place!

C) Our tendency all too often is – Horizontal first

1) Vertical 2<sup>nd</sup> – Backwards

D) Courage does not mean a lack of fear, but a Focus of strength –

1) Right Theology helps our Focus on God get bigger and our problems and enemy gets Smaller!

Another big part of their Theology was their Feast – Three major feasts that took place during the 7<sup>th</sup> Month

A) In the **seventh month** they celebrated the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Trumpets, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

**B)They celebrated the feast of Tabernacles –**

- 1)Remembered 40 years of wandering in the wilderness –
- They would camp out in tents – God’s provision

**C)This group could relate –**

- 1)Traveled 900 miles in 4-5 months

**1<sup>st</sup> A Commitment to their Theology**

**2<sup>nd</sup> A Commitment to God’s word**

A)How did they know to set up the altar? We read (3:2), **“as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.”**

A)Why did they observe the Feast of Tabernacles? We read (3:4), **“as it is written,” and “according to the ordinance.”**

**C)They weren’t making this stuff up according to their own preferences.**

D)They didn’t take a poll to find out what the people wanted to do.

E)They were reclaiming their Theology.

**They got back to the word**

A)Whenever there is going to be Restoration and Renewal that takes place in our hearts, Families, Church

**B)If ever in this country it is going to start with the Altar**

- 1)It is going to involve getting back to the Bible.

**C)My opinions, desires, habits, priorities - FORMED BY God’s Word.**

D)Too many people want to ignore the Bible – parts of the Bible make up their own ideas -

**3<sup>rd</sup> They had a Commitment to Giving:**

**7 They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia.**

A)Ch.2 V.68-69 They Gave willingly – best – not coerced – but out of Joy – Response – What God has done

**B)They gave according to their ability which implies that the wealthier people gave more,**

- 1)but the poor also gave as they could.

**C)V.1 the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem.**

- 1)Unity around Theology – Unity around the Word  
Unity connected to Sacrifice.

**That attitude is prevalent in any endeavor where God does something radical.**

A)A willingness of a group of people to rally around a VISION – Greater than themselves

B)Rally together for the purpose of Seeing God do something great with them / in them / thru them.

C)IN a family where there has been discord – Restoration and Renewal take Sacrifice

- 1)Dying to Self – my rights – surrendering of bitterness

D)Yielding to the Lord

**God works mightily through a Church in a community –**

A)Believers step up and give – step up and get involved

B)Great example of that here

**1<sup>st</sup> A Commitment to their Theology**

**2<sup>nd</sup> A Commitment to God’s word**

**3<sup>rd</sup> They had a Commitment to Giving**

**4<sup>th</sup> They had a Commitment to Service: V.8-9**

**<sup>8</sup> Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began work and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> Then Jeshua with his sons and brothers, Kadmiel with his sons, and the sons of Judah, arose as one to oversee those working on the house of God: the sons of Henadad with their sons and their brethren the Levites.**

V.8 reveals two yrs have elapsed from the time where they have come back to actually start building.

A)Restoration takes time – and Continuity –

B)Delay was probably caused by the cleansing of the temple area / gathering of materials & supplies

1)So now the work is actually beginning!

Interesting This is 535 BC exactly 70yrs from the time when the deportation began in 605 BC.

A)So it is exactly 70yrs just like Jeremiah prophesied

70yrs later they are laying the foundation stone of the temple again.

B)Encouraging because God has declared certain things that will take place in our day.

1)**This encourages us** – they will happen – they will take place

C)**God is faithful to His word** – prophecy will be fulfilled –

1)Jesus is coming

They were committed to Service

A) **Jeshua with his sons and brothers**

B)Whole Families – Poseys' Youngermens

C)Dads with Sons – Steak and Study – Men's Retreat

1)Aaron NZ

The list in Ch.2 shows us the variety of service, all these different people – different functions – all doing their share!

A)The body of Christ functions that way – Body – different members – different functions

B)Some parts are visible – some are hidden

1)We all do our part!

C)Restoration in a Family – relationship

1)Commitment to Work

D)Can't just be one person in the equation

1<sup>st</sup> A Commitment to their Theology

2<sup>nd</sup> A Commitment to God's word

3<sup>rd</sup> They had a Commitment to Giving:

4<sup>th</sup> They had a Commitment to Service: V.8-9

5<sup>th</sup> They had a Commitment to Worship. V.10-11

10 When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD:

Everything they had a commitment to could fall under the Umbrella of Worship

A)Worship is a lifestyle – Not just singing songs

B)Theology – time in the word – giving – service  
All worship

1)Lifestyle that RECOGNIZES – YIELDED TO GOD

C)Worship involves praise:

Note: There were instruments

A)There was singing

B)They Sang responsively

1)Meaning – not just ritual or going through the motions

C)Heart felt Response to God's goodness

D)They sang – Responsively Praising and giving thanks V.11 **“For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel.”**

E)It also involved emotion: V.11 **Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.**

Restoration and Renewal is going to Result in Community

A)Seen – Gathered together as one Man –

B)Nothing builds unity – like Altar – Cross – all sinners saved by grace

C)Worship – eyes off of us and on to Him

D)Serving together – common cause – purpose and passion

1)Willingness to sacrifice our time and resources – be involved in something greater than ourselves

## What is involved in Restoration and Renewal?

### 1<sup>st</sup> Commitment:

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Cooperation:

➤ Cooperation between young and old V.12-13

<sup>12</sup> But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, <sup>13</sup> so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.

When this group of 50,000 came back there were people who were still living in the land. –

Remnant -

A) There were people who had been born in the land during those 70 yrs of exile

B) There were people who were in their 20/30's at the time when that 2<sup>nd</sup> invasion occurred and the temple and the city were destroyed.

1) 50 yrs had past and those people were now in their 70's and 80's

C) Imagine the look on their faces and the emotion when they saw this group of almost 50k walking into the city.

D) Some of them were priest – Levites and they were bringing with them the vessels of the temple.

E) Some of them were no doubt thinking that they would never have proper worship again.

They watched as the altar was built and their hearts were filled with Joy

A) Two years pass – the foundation of the Temple is reset – there is a mixed reaction

B) Young men are cheering – excited -

C) Think about how many are standing here amazed

1) because they have never dreamed that they would be standing in Jerusalem.

D) How many of those Priests and Levites grew up hearing about Aaron and the other priests

Heard stories about the temple – the sacrifices – the presence of God in that place

A) Never dreaming that they would have the opportunity to officiate in that place that God had set apart for His people to worship Him

B) Now they are Standing on that very spot – Altar is built

C) All they can say is God you are Good !

1) You are merciful – Your mercy endures forever!

D) So the Young men are Cheering – excited

But the Old men Wept!

A) They were there when the other temple was torn down. – Tears of Joy. – Never imagined this day

Haggai (2:3) lets us know that this Temple was kind of plain compared to the other.

A) The older men knew that his temple would never match up to the glory of the first.

B) After all, King Solomon spent the modern equivalent of \$5 to \$8 billion on building the first temple.

C) Maybe crying because of that!

D) Maybe crying because their friends were crying

So while the young men shouted for joy, the old men wept in grief.

A) You couldn't tell who was laughing and who was crying, except that the division pretty much fell along age lines.

Restoration and Renewal was going to involve cooperation between the Old and Young.

A) People new in the Lord – Younger generation can get excited about things

B) Excited when they see God doing things

C) Older generation – tendency to Compare it to what we saw!

D) Tonight – someone new in the Lord – amazed – 150 people here for study – Most churches – No Midweek

**We who have been around 20 plus years remember when this place was packed on Wed.**

**A)Most Churches had a Midweek – Sports avoided**

**B)Some of us remember back to the Jesus people movement Calvary Costa Mesa – midweek – 30 minutes early – or no seat**

**C)So we have to be Careful – We can long for God to move mightily –**

**1)Another Revival – Only Scratching the surface**

**D)But to some – this is all they know and it is special to them.**

**Older believers – need to encourage and fuel the enthusiasm of the young**

**A)Young need to respect the heart – commitment and the wisdom of the old**

**B)Years ago – Young guys around here – Blow up everything and start over**

**C)Make Calvary Vista more Youth Friendly – oriented**

**D)But they lacked sensitivity to the Older saints**

**Multi-generational Church**

**A)Many ages – good – the way it is supposed to be**

**B)But the ages have to co-operate – Appreciate – Promote – being together**

**Jesus people movement: Long hair – Short hair coats and ties – T-shirts - Blue jeans**

**A)Cultural differences aside.**

**B)Rallied behind a Theology – Cross centered**

**C)Rallied together in the Word**

**D)In Giving**

**E)In Service**

**F)In Worship**