

**Ezra 3:8-13 (New International Version)**

<sup>8</sup> In the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak and the rest of the people (the priests and the Levites and **all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem**) **began the work**. They appointed Levites twenty years old and older to supervise the building of the house of the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> Joshua and his sons and brothers and Kadmiel and his sons (descendants of Hodaviah<sup>[a]</sup>) and the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers—**all Levites—joined together in supervising those working on the house of God**.

<sup>10</sup> When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel.

<sup>11</sup> With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD:  
"He is good;  
his love toward Israel endures forever."

**And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the** foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

<sup>12</sup> But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy.

<sup>13</sup> No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

Good Morning, my sisters and brothers in Christ! I greet you this morning in the name of the Lord God of Israel. I greet you in the name of His Son, Jesus the Christ. I greet you in the name of the Comforter sent to dwell with us until Jesus comes again. I don't know about you, but when I think about the Lord and His grace and His mercy: It makes me wanna shout, Hallelujah, Thank you Jesus, Lord, you are worth, of all the glory and all the honor and all the praise.<sup>1</sup> There ought to be a time when you also want to shout.

Last Sunday I provided an overview of the next nine weeks of sermons. If you missed that sermon you should know that it is already on the website. We want to thank Verna for all of her efforts to keep us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Each week I will add a little to that overview so that you are able to understand where we are in the historical story. For it is in the historical story that we will search for the 21<sup>st</sup> century application.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah present the history of God's people during the years following the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple built there by King Solomon. From Ezra and Nehemiah along with the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah we learn the story of the exiles as they return to Jerusalem from Babylon after about a 70-year absence. An absence, an exile, a captivity, which was the direct result of their disobedience to the Lord God. Last week we learned that the policies enacted by King Cyrus when he overthrew Babylon – policies by a foreign King that did not believe in the Lord God of Israel – these policies allowed the Jews who wanted to do so to return to Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>

Last Sunday our theme was **WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET HOME?** as we considered Ezra 3:1-7. Using home as both a physical

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.elyrics.net/read/h/hillsong-united-lyrics/when-i-think-about-the-lord-lyrics.html>

<sup>2</sup> David C Cook Bible Lesson Commentary 2012-2013 p.363

location and a new beginning I answered the question with these teaching points.

### **WHAT DID THEY DO WHEN THEY GOT HOME**

1. They went to church
2. They worshipped God
3. They brought their tithes and offerings into the storehouse
4. They used the money from the storehouse to pay for things they need for the temple of God.

Today we are considering verses 8-13 of the same chapter, Ezra 3. As we just read the people are beginning the work of laying the foundation for the temple. Just in case you are asleep, I want to remind you that first, they built an altar so that they could worship as the Law of Moses taught them. Now that they have worshipped God, thanked God, offered sacrifices and tithes and offerings to God –**then and only then** – did they begin to rebuild the temple. Now someone might say that sounds backwards, but think about it. When this church was started it worshipped in a local school until they could build the education wing, then they worshipped in the education wing until they could build the sanctuary. Our own foundation as FBC- Park Forest is based on worshipping God, praising God, giving to God, seeking God **before** we build a house for God.

Let me go down this bunny trail for just a moment. I wonder how God feels about houses built for Him that do not do His work. Houses, that don't welcome the stranger. Houses, which will not feed the hungry, unless they are members. Houses, that have no room or clothes for the naked.

**Mat 25:45** *Then he will answer them, 'I tell you the truth, just as you did not do it for one of the **least** of these, you did not do it for me.'*

I wonder if God is pleased with those Houses built in His name that do not do what His Son taught.

So the people of God laid the foundation on top of the destroyed foundation. They laid the foundation during the same time period that Solomon had held the groundbreaking service for the first temple over 400 years before. They worked together and they laid the foundation. When the foundation had been laid

*<sup>11</sup> With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD:*

***"He is good;***

***his love toward Israel endures forever."***

*And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid*

With that as background information would you consider with me this theme?

### **WHAT HAVE WE GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

Shall we pray! Father God we praise you and magnify your name from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same. We are here in your house this morning in need of a Word from you. We ask that you look beyond our failures and our faults and grant us entrance into your presence. Help us; allow us, to hear from heaven. Abba, I asked that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight. For you O Lord are my rock, my strength and my Redeemer. And all God's people said, AMEN and AMEN.

### **WHAT HAVE I GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

Jasmyne called last week and she began the conversation with "Mommie, I am so frustrated. It seems like every step we make forward something happens that pulls us back." With that as an opening I began to listen as she explained that the housing complex she has lived in for 9 months just reviewed their records and realized that they were not being charged a monthly assessment for their pets. The impact is a \$300 fee; a trip to the vet for physicals and shots; and an increase in rent of \$60 per month for the pets. For some reason, perhaps the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I continued to listen and did not offer any suggestions. At the end of the rant, Jasmyne took a deep breath and said, "at least it is not retro

active, and we don't have to pay what they overlooked... I thank God for that".

### **WHAT HAVE I GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

Saturday May 25 I broke my foot. Almost from the beginning I have asked God to show me the lesson to be learned from a broken foot. I am not sure I have heard from heaven, but I have made some observations. This congregation has shown their love for me and my family. Not a single day has passed since May 25<sup>th</sup> that I have not received a card in the mail, a phone call, a visitor, a hot meal, an offer to do what I am unable to do. But not only that, in my house, unable to drive and during the first three weeks unable to do much of anything else I have had time to think. Think about the first 53 years of my life. Think about the past 10 years of my life. Think about how I wish to live the next 10. Think about the goodness and mercy of a Living God.

### **WHAT HAVE I GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

In the past God's people have shouted and made a loud noise for God. In fact my research says that David in the book of Psalms taught the people to shout over 20 times.

Psa 33:3 Sing to him a new song;  
play skillfully, and shout for joy.

Psa 47:1 Clap your hands, all you nations;  
shout to God with cries of joy.

Psa 66:1  
Shout for joy to God, all the earth!

But now we don't want to shout! We want to praise God in spirit and in truth, but quietly. One of the KS told me that one Sunday she was listening to the sermon and she "got it". She got it so well that she wanted to shout, but she was afraid that others would look at her funny. I told her the next time she felt like shouting to shout.

### **WHAT HAVE I GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

As I listened to my daughter first rant and then praise God, anyhow. As I shared some time with a KS and realized that she was listening and on that particular day she got it. As I thought about my foot and the open ended treatment plan and realized that all things were still working for good I found myself crying and shouting at the same time. In the midst of the bad and frustrating I still had something to shout about.

### **WHAT HAVE I GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

The Word of God through the Children of Israel teaches us a few things about **the when** and **the what** of shouting.

*all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem) began the work. all Levites—joined together in supervising those working on the house of God*

**WHEN ALL GOD'S PEOPLE ARE ON ONE ACCORD – WHEN WE ARE LIKE MINDED – WHEN WE HAVE THE SAME LOVE FOR CHRIST AND EACH OTHER THAT IS PLEASING TO GOD AND THAT IS WORTH SHOUTING ABOUT**

*PHIL 2: 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.*

*the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel.*

**WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE FOLLOW THE SCRIPTURES – DO WHAT HAS BEEN TAUGHT AND REVEALED – TEST THE SCRIPTURE AGAINST THE SCRIPTURE –**

PSA 147:1 Praise the LORD.<sup>[a]</sup>

How good it is to sing praises to our God,  
how pleasant and fitting to praise him!

PSA 148:7 Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,  
<sup>8</sup> lightning and hail, snow and clouds,  
stormy winds that do his bidding,  
<sup>9</sup> you mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars,  
<sup>10</sup> wild animals and all cattle,

small creatures and flying birds,  
<sup>11</sup> kings of the earth and all nations,  
 you princes and all rulers on earth,  
<sup>12</sup> young men and women,  
 old men and children.

ROMANS 15:11 And again, "*Praise the Lord all you Gentiles,  
 and let all the peoples praise him.*"

#### SOMEONE IS SAYING:

But Pastor Carol, what about the fact that some of the old folks were weeping and some were shouting for joy.

I am an old folk now and I think I understand. They and therefore we weep sometimes when we think back to a period in our lives that we thought was a better time.

- we didn't have to lock our doors
- our children were safe in the neighborhood and city parks
- we had jobs and felt secure
- we had our health and strength and energy

When we think back to those times we may be inclined to weep.

But old folks our children don't know those times and they don't understand the weeping. They live in these times and if they are not shouting – they are looking for a reason to shout.

Teach them to shout –

- because they are able to go to school and not work in the fields
- because they have a church that is paid for and theirs
- because they have what they need and some of what they want

Teach them to shout –

- because they and their friends graduated high school
- because they have the found jobs
- because they have parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents that love and care for them

**TELL THEM TO SHOUT BECAUSE GOD HAS PROVIDED!!**

**WHAT HAVE I GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

- **WHEN ALL GOD'S PEOPLE ARE ON ONE ACCORD**
- **WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE FOLLOW THE SCRIPTURES**
- **BECAUSE GOD HAS PROVIDED**

**THIS WEEK I CHALLENGE YOU TO MAKE A LIST OF THINGS YOU HAVE TO SHOUT ABOUT.**

<sup>12</sup> But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy.

<sup>13</sup> No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.