

Built for Worship
Finishing with a feast – Ezra 6:13-22

Celebrating victories, recalling the journey

The purpose of God: to enable us to worship Him (v.13-18)

The officials carried out the king's decree with diligence (v.13)

The people built and prospered under the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah (v.14)

“They finished building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel...” (v.14)

“...and the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia.” (v.14)

The response to God: abundant joy at our rescue (v.19-22)

The Passover festival (v.19)

Drawing others in to worship God (v.21)

The cross is the ultimate rescue!

The best celebration is to come: “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” (Revelation 19:9)

Questions for personal reflection or discussion over the coming week

What stories do you re-tell of achievements made or victories won in your life or experience? Why does looking back and recalling the journey grow a sense of thankfulness or satisfaction?

Why was it important to summarise the story of the completion of the temple at the end of this section of the book of Ezra?

Are you finding that you are being built up and prospering (see v.14) by the word of God at the moment? If not, how might you use your time more effectively in order to hear God's voice in deepening your faith in Jesus?

What was the most important factor in finishing the temple rebuild? Why is it important not to lose sight of this in the story? What is the most important factor for the building of your life to be completed one day? How will you not lose sight of who is the master builder?

The temple was rebuilt to enable God's people to worship Him.

How does God enable us to worship Him today? Why is Jesus central to that? Why is a building less important to us as Christians?

How might you dedicate yourselves to God at this time as you worship Him at home?

How might you connect with other Christians to worship, at this time when we cannot meet outside of our households?

How might you draw others towards Jesus at this time, even though you can't physically mix outside your household?

Perhaps you feel restricted in your life at the moment, given the pandemic we're experiencing. But are you able to meditate on the amazing rescue won by Jesus, and respond with joy in your heart?

If you are a Christian, what will help you to look forward with anticipation, to the ultimate celebration at the Lamb's wedding banquet?