

COMING HOME

A STUDY OF EZRA



WEEK 5: REMEMBRANCE AND PURPOSE

Read the Text

Ezra 5-6

5:1-5: Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were with them, supporting them.

At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus: “Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?” They also asked them this: “What are the names of the men who are building this building?” But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report should reach Darius and then an answer be returned by letter concerning it.

Main Point

The book of Ezra reflects a pattern of the human condition that has existed since the fall. Throughout the Bible, we see God sovereignly act, His people celebrate, they then forget His way, God reminds them of His way, and the cycle continues. We see

this in Ezra as the Israelites **forget** what God has called them to and they stop building the temple. God then **reminds** them through His prophets what He has called them to, and then He **sovereignly acts** through the governing authorities, and the Israelites **celebrate** by dedicating the building and celebrating with joy.

Reflect Together

- 1. Who is God?:** When we forget, God reminds. This is good news for us as Christians, because we know we aren't alone in our sin. God loves us and wants us, and so He can sovereignly act to remind us to abide in Him. Reflect on this together. God intentionally pursues us even when we're in active rebellion. How does that make you feel? How do you struggle to believe this truth? Consider the sermon from a few weeks ago that *God doesn't need us, but He wants us*.
- 2. What has He done?:** When was a time in your life that you were sinning or rebelling against what God wanted for you (maybe that's happening right now)? How did He remind you or act sovereignly to align your heart with His? How did that change or strengthen your faith?
- 3. Who are you?:** The Israelites struggled with proper prioritization in their lives. They were pursuing the shallow comfort of life while God's house laid in ruins. Our lives today have the same temptations: the distraction of careers, hobbies, sports schedules, and more can take us away from what God wants for us. When you look at your life, what does the prioritization say about your relationship with Jesus? This isn't meant to be a shame-fest! It's an invitation to look at our lives and ask God to give us discernment of what we should be saying yes or no to so that we can live a life marked by the joy that comes through following and abiding in Him!

4. *What are you to do?* In these chapters, we see God remind the Israelites of their calling. Discovering that calling produces great joy in them, and they celebrate together! What calling do you think God has on your life right now? Maybe you're already doing it, or maybe He's calling you into something else. How can your MC or DNA support you in following that calling? What's a next step you can take?

Abide Together

Take some time to pray over any growth or struggles that came up in tonight's discussion. Pray for one another as they consider their calling.

Mission Together

Regardless of our specific calling, God calls all of us to be a light in the world and to be faithful to Him wherever we are. At Doxa, we use the phrase "disciples in the everyday stuff of life" to describe this. Wherever we are, we are on mission! How can you be on mission this week in your everyday life, whether that's at the office, in the home, at school, practice, or wherever. How can you practice the presence of Jesus with others?