



Coming Home



Last Week

- People were taken captive against their will
- Their depression was deep
- Their captivity was long; 70 years
- They came back in stages
- When they came back it was like they were in a dream
- The first thing they did once they settled in their homes was build an altar to God

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- ➔ **Ezra 1:7 Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the temple of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his god. Cyrus king of Persia had them brought by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah...**
 - ➔ **¹¹ In all, there were 5,400 articles of gold and of silver. Sheshbazzar brought all these along with the exiles when they came up from Babylon to Jerusalem.**



Ezra 3:1 When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled together as one in Jerusalem. ² Then Joshua son of Jozadak and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. ³ Despite their fear of the peoples around them, they built the altar on its foundation and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening sacrifices. NIV



In coming back together the first thing we do is worship God

- ➔ Brought Temple articles with them to rebuild**
- ➔ For 70 yrs no sacrifices for their sins**
- ➔ Their sins had built up**
- ➔ They didn't have Jesus**
 - ➔ He provided the one sacrifice for all**
- ➔ They needed a fresh feeling of forgiveness**
- ➔ They needed a fresh breath from God**
- ➔ They needed to live into their new worship**



While in captivity the way they experienced worship changed

- **No longer centralized**
 - **They were now away from the temple**
 - **It had been torn down in the occupancy**
 - **Been used to coming to the temple**
 - **Been used to a priest sacrificing an animal for their forgiveness**
 - **Been used to someone else preparing the worship and they took part**



While in captivity the way they experienced loving God changed

- ➔ No longer centralized**
- ➔ Now they were responsible for their own spiritual growth and remembrances**
 - ➔ The synagogue system was born**
 - ➔ Small groups became their vehicle for spiritual growth**
 - ➔ You too, have become responsible for your own spiritual growth in the last weeks**
 - ➔ Some intentional, some not**

They came back and they started over!

- Living Hope is a great place to start or start over
- They brought the items needed to worship again
- This time the meaning was
 - Deeper
 - Not taken for granted
 - Personal

So What?

- **In the last 11 weeks, what have you done to keep your spiritual life alive?**
- **What do you intend to do NOW to keep growing?**
- **What did you miss about worship?**
 - **Connection to God?**
 - **Connection to friends?**
 - **The sacredness of a Holy Place**