

Sunday, 03-20-2022

Celebrate Passover Liberation
Bible Background: Ezra 6:13-22; Leviticus 23:4-8
Devotional Reading: Exodus 2:23-25

Aim for Change (Page 329):

1. We will **EXPLORE** the celebration prompted by the completion of the new Temple
2. **IDENTIFY** reasons to celebrate God's goodness
3. **JOIN TOGETHER** as believers in celebrating and sharing the Good News of God's love.

In Focus Question(s) (Page 329):

- How have you seen a large project, like this building project, bring people together?
- What prevents members from having the same vision for expansion as God and the shepherd over the house He has chosen? (*Genesis 6:5*; Numbers 15:24; *1 Samuel 2:3*; Proverbs 8:13)

In Depth (Page 332-333):

1. The People Finish and Rejoice (*Ezra 6:13-16*)
 - a. How many times do we complete a task after many struggles and then get it in our head that it was by our own strength? (Exodus 15:2; Leviticus 26:20; Amos 6:13; Acts 7:41-42; *2 Corinthians 12:9*)
 - b. When you rejoice after finally finishing a task/project that took some, who gets credit first? God or self? (Deuteronomy 26:11; *Isaiah 61:10*)
2. The People of Israel Offer Sacrifices (*Ezra 6:17-18*)
 - a. Can you ever offer God enough when giving an offering? Is your offering genuine/heartfelt or is it out of habit because you think that's what's expected? (*Leviticus 23:10*; Numbers 18: 11-13; *1 Kings 8:63*; 2 Chronicles 7:5)
 - b. Will any sacrifice/offering due when giving to God? (Genesis 4:2-6; Deuteronomy 12:11; *Mark 12:41-43*; *2 Corinthians 9:7*)
3. The Feasts Celebrated (*Ezra 6:19-22*)
 - a. Why were the purification rites important before celebrating Passover? (*Mark 1:15*; Acts 15:8-9; *2 Corinthians 13:4-6*; Titus 2:14; James 4:8)
 - b. Have you repented if you still have the same bad habits that hinder your relationship with God? (2 Kings 22:5; *Job 8:20*; Romans 2:13; *James 1:21-26*)

Search the Scriptures (Page 333):

1. When was the Temple completed? (Ezra 6:15)
2. What was offered during the dedication? (Ezra 6:17)

Discuss the Meaning (Page 333):

1. Why was it important for those returning from exile to celebrate the Passover?
2. God used three pagan kings to do His will in rebuilding Jerusalem. What does this reveal about God and His plans for His nation? (*Ezra 6:14*)

Liberating Lesson (Page 334):

1. What obstacles could have been avoided if the elders had moved swiftly after they received the first command from King Cyrus?
2. What are you procrastinating? (*Proverbs 19:15-16*; Ecclesiastes 10:18; *Matthew 12:35-37*; 1 Timothy 5:12-13)