

## A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families for the week of March 8, 2020

### **They Kept the Feast with Joy**

This week, Pastor Steve Shelby preached from [Ezra 6:16-22](#)

<sup>16</sup> And the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. <sup>17</sup> They offered at the dedication of this house of God 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. <sup>18</sup> And they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their divisions, for the service of God at Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses.

<sup>19</sup> On the fourteenth day of the first month, the returned exiles kept the Passover. <sup>20</sup> For the priests and the Levites had purified

themselves together; all of them were clean. So they slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves. <sup>21</sup> It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by every one who had joined them and separated himself from the uncleanness of the peoples of the land to worship the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>22</sup> And they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the LORD had made them joyful and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

- Our text today is bracketed with joy.
  - “Celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy” (16)
  - “For the LORD had made them joyful” (22)
- Joy in the face of reality
- “22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep” ([II Kings 8:63](#)) vs “100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs” (17)
- No Ark of the covenant, none of the things in the Ark of the covenant
- No king
- Still...
  - They are all in this together, “12 male goats” (17)
  - They ate and celebrated. These bulls and rams and lambs were eaten
  - They kept the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread that went for a week after the Passover.
- King of Assyria? (22)
- Christ is the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” ([John 1:29](#))
- “Christ our Passover has sacrificed for us, let us keep the feast” ([II Corinthians 5:7-8](#))
- The work of God continues
- Joy supersedes failure and sin in God’s economy