

# Exploring Ezra

## 7. Ezra 6.13-22: The Passover Restored *Worshipping with Joy!*

**Aim:** To look at the reasons that Israel worshipped with joy at God's restoration of the temple and think about our own attitudes in worship.

### To Start With:

What sorts of corporate worship are you aware of that different sorts of Christians practise? (You could compile a list on a big piece of paper). What style of worship do you find most helpful and why?

How far do your frame of mind/ emotions influence the way in which you worship God when we meet together to praise him as a church? To what extent is that a good or bad thing?

### Engaging with the Text

*After opposition and the intervention of God's prophets and King Darius the restoration of the temple was finally completed in 515 BC.*

1. Hand out a copy of the passage to all the group members (**See Study 7 - Handout 1**). Ask one person to read it aloud. Then ask everyone to take five minutes to read and underline/highlight the recurring themes or ideas in this passage.  
Discuss together what you notice.
2. Look closely at the list in v14b. Why do you think the writer is putting them in this order what point is he trying to make? (v22 might help)
3.
  - a) Imagine yourself in the story as one of the 'returned exiles'. Describe how you would feel celebrating this Passover meal with fellow returnees - what things are you actually celebrating?
  - b) Look back to Ch 3v11-13. How do you imagine the elders who wept at the temple's foundations are responding now at its completion?
  - c) What do you think this joyful celebration involved/ looked like? (A quick glance at Exodus 12 might help - there is communal eating, drinking, prayer, singing, Ch 3.10-11 also helps fill the picture out.... Jewish festivals were a big party!) What do you think we could learn from this?

5. One of the continual exhortations of the Psalms is to sing joyfully  
(Psalm 33:1-3)

### Think together about:

- Why we need to be reminded about how we worship
- What reasons we have to worship with joy
- What it means to worship joyfully (even if our emotions don't match that)
- How we can help ourselves and one another to be joyful worshippers of God and what that might actually look like when we gather to celebrate all God has done for us!

### Response

Spend some time either in worship or asking God to give us his Spirit to help us grow in joyful worship as a community.

