

## Exile and Return: God Brings His People Home Ezra 1:1-8; 3:1-13

THEME - Like the Israelites who were exiles were awaiting to go home and we also are waiting to God home while we wait, trust, give, worship and proclaim.

### I. Waiting. (Ezra 1:1-2)

Waiting on God is a period of time through which the Lord causes us to turn to Him for His presence and strength. Obeying Him in what we know, while waiting, is crucial to experiencing His full work in and through us.

Jeremiah 29:10-11 - "The Lord says: 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.'"

#### 1. Is a way of life.

Psalm 40:1-2 - "I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure."

#### 2. Will grow us.

Psalm 62:5 - "For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him."

#### 3. Is temporary.

Philippians 3:30 - "...our citizenship is in heaven, and...we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

## II. Giving. (Ezra 1:3-8)

2 Corinthians 9:7 - "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:11 - "You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God."

## III. Worshiping. (Ezra 3:1-7)

Worship is knowing, enjoying and declaring the worth of Jesus Christ.

## IV. Proclaiming. (Ezra 3:8-13)

**Reviewing this Past Sunday with Family and Friends**  
**Exile and Return: God Brings His People Home**  
**Ezra 1:1-8; 3:1-13**

1. Some people say they prefer to worship God in nature and do not need the church. Why must we never divorce worship from gathering with God's people?
2. Name a place-perhaps a building or a location-where you had a powerful spiritual experience with God. What does that place represent for you today?
3. Why must we never divorce worship from God's word? (John 4:22-24, 8:31-32, 15:7-8)
4. In what ways have you witnessed God using non-believers to accomplish His purposes in your life?
5. How should our stewardship habits change when we acknowledge that everything is the Lord's and is to be used for His purposes? How would you describe your financial giving? Giving of your time? Giving of encouraging words?
6. Waiting is a key theme in scripture. Review the following verses and use them to build your faith and pray. Isaiah 8:17, 30:18, 40:31, 64:4, Psalm 25:4-5, 27:13-14, 33:20-22, 37:7, 39:7, 40:1, 52:9, 62:1 & 5, 130:5-6, Philippians 3:20, Titus 2:13, and James 5:7-8.