GENESIS TO REVELATION | BIBLE ACCOUNT

A Beginning Filled with Joy and Tears

Ezra 3:1-13



YOUR BIBLE READING

A new beginning can hold gratitude and grief together.

Inside: two extended reading pages, a thoughtful reflection, creative activities and a grown-up guide.

AGES 6-10 WITH AN ADULT • 6 COLORFUL A4 PAGES • ENGLISH ONLY

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 1 OF 2

Worship Begins Before the House Is Built

Ezra 3:1-13



The people who had returned from captivity were living in their towns. In the seventh month, they gathered together at Jerusalem. Jeshua and the other priests, along with Zerubbabel and his relatives, built the altar of Israel's God. They followed the law given through Moses. The work began with a place for offerings, even though the larger temple building had not yet been raised around it or given its new foundation.

They set the altar on its base despite fear of the surrounding peoples. Offerings were made morning and evening. They also kept the Feast of Booths according to the written instructions, with the required daily offerings. Worship had a pattern involving special days and ordinary days. The account does not say they waited until every part of life felt easy before beginning. It names both their fear and the actions they took together.

From the first day of that seventh month, they began offering sacrifices. Yet the temple's foundation was still not laid. This distinction matters: the altar and the temple foundation were not the same stage of work. The passage marks a beginning that was real but incomplete. People could worship at the altar while there remained much to arrange for the house itself, with builders, materials, and oversight still needed for what would come next.

Money was given to masons and carpenters. Food, drink, and oil went to the people of Sidon and Tyre so that cedar could be brought from Lebanon by sea to Joppa, under the permission granted by Cyrus, king of Persia. The building needed more than enthusiasm. Workers and supplies had to be provided. The account moves from a gathered community and an altar toward the practical preparation required for the next stage of rebuilding.

Remember: I can notice progress without asking people to forget what they have lost.

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 2 OF 2

One Foundation, Different Responses

Ezra 3:1-13



In the second year after arriving, the work on God's house began in the second month. Zerubbabel, Jeshua, the priests, Levites, and others who had returned took part. Levites twenty years old and above were appointed to oversee the work. Named families shared the responsibility of directing the workers. This was a community task with arrangements for supervision, rather than a finished temple appearing simply because the people had agreed that they wanted one.

When the builders laid the temple foundation, priests stood in their special clothing with trumpets. Levites from Asaph's family had cymbals. They praised God according to the directions associated with David. They sang back and forth with thanks for God's goodness and enduring kindness toward Israel. The new foundation gave the people a reason to gather in praise. It marked progress they could see, though it was not yet the completed house.

Many people shouted loudly with joy. At the same time, older priests, Levites, and family heads who had seen the first temple wept aloud. They were looking at the new foundation with memories the younger people did not share in the same way. The passage records their tears without making up private conversations explaining exactly what each person thought. Joy and weeping were both heard at this important beginning in Jerusalem.

The sounds mixed so strongly that people could not distinguish the joyful shouting from the crying. The noise carried far away. This is where the chapter ends, with a foundation laid and a community responding in different ways. It does not force every person into one approved feeling. A new beginning can bring thanks while also making earlier losses vivid. The reading lets both responses stand beside the practical progress of the rebuilding work.

Pause and think: How could you welcome both joy and sadness when someone faces a new beginning?

THINK, NOTICE & GROW

Make Room for More Than One Feeling



Imagine moving to a new classroom. You might enjoy something in the new space and miss something about the old one. Another child may feel differently. This is an ordinary example, not an event added to Ezra. How could a group celebrate a beginning without requiring everyone to say that nothing has been lost? Listening can make room for both appreciation and sadness.

A foundation is an early part of a building, not the whole finished structure. Think of a project you can divide into stages. Which step would be worth noticing before everything is complete? An adult might help you see progress that is easy to overlook. Celebrating one stage need not mean pretending the work is finished or that no further help will be needed.

People of different ages may carry different memories of the same place. Ask a trusted older person about a school, home, or community space they remember. Let them choose what to share. You do not need to correct their feelings. A careful question can help you understand why a place means more to someone than the walls or objects you can see today.

A SMALL STEP FOR TODAY

The returned community lays a new foundation, and joy and tears are heard together without becoming the same response.

How could you welcome both joy and sadness when someone faces a new beginning?

Read, Remember & Create

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Think about the reading

1. What was built before the temple foundation was laid?

2. What two sounds mingled when the foundation was laid?

2 Put the ideas in order

Write 1, 2 and 3 for the order these ideas appear in the reading.

- ☐ Praise, joyful shouting, and weeping mingle.
- ☐ The people rebuild the altar and begin worship.
- ☐ Workers and materials are prepared, and the foundation is laid.

3 Draw a meaningful picture

Draw a foundation with people using symbols of music and tears to show different responses.

Tell someone how your picture connects to the reading.

Read & Grow Together

Read and learn with context

This English edition is designed for ages 6-10 with an adult. Read both extended readings together, or enjoy one each day. Pause at unfamiliar words, invite questions and use the reflection page to connect the story with everyday life. These are retellings and lessons with explanations; read the listed Bible passage for context. Poetry, parables, letters and symbolic visions are identified by type.

Remember this

I can notice progress without asking people to forget what they have lost.
Original memory thought, not a direct Bible quotation. Related passage: Ezra 3:10-13

A thoughtful conversation

Distinguish the rebuilt altar from the later laying of the temple foundation, and do not claim the whole temple is completed here. The older witnesses' tears are recorded, but their individual thoughts are not. Allow children mixed feelings about change; joy does not make grief wrong, and grief does not cancel real progress.

Activity answers

1. The altar was built and offerings began.
2. Joyful shouting and loud weeping mingled.
Sequence boxes, top to bottom: 3, 1, 2. Personal responses and drawings will vary.

Optional prayer

If you wish: God, help me welcome honest feelings and notice hopeful beginnings with care.

Print and share

Each pack has 6 pages. Print on A4 at Actual Size (100%). The worksheet is page 5. You may print just that page, or use the separate 150-page activity book. The collection contains 150 packs in Bible book order, 15 volumes and one ZIP. Catalog pack IDs stay the same when new readings are added.

Sources and sharing

English retellings, lessons, reflections and activities by DigiPick (2026), based on Ezra 3:1-13. Source checked with the public-domain World English Bible. Illustration: original symbolic vector artwork by DigiPick.store; a learning aid, not an additional Bible event.
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