

Ezra 3:1–3, 10-11 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> In early autumn, when the Israelites had settled in their towns, all the people assembled in Jerusalem with a unified purpose.

<sup>2</sup> Then Jeshua son of Jehozadak joined his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his family in rebuilding the altar of the God of Israel. They wanted to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, as instructed in the Law of Moses, the man of God.

<sup>3</sup> Even though the people were afraid of the local residents, they rebuilt the altar at its old site. Then they began to sacrifice burnt offerings on the altar to the LORD each morning and evening.

<sup>10</sup> When the builders completed the foundation of the LORD's Temple, the priests put on their robes and took their places to blow their trumpets. And the Levites, descendants of Asaph, clashed their cymbals to praise the LORD, just as King David had prescribed.

<sup>11</sup> With praise and thanks, they sang this song to the LORD: “He is so good! His faithful love for Israel endures forever!” Then all the people gave a great shout, praising the LORD because the foundation of the LORD’s Temple had been laid.

# **First Things FIRST**

**Ezra 3**

<sup>3</sup> **Despite their FEAR** of the peoples around them, they **built the altar on ITS Foundation** and sacrificed **burnt offerings** on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening sacrifices.

<sup>4</sup> They celebrated **the Festival of Shelters**  
**AS** prescribed in **the Law**,  
sacrificing the number of **burnt offerings**  
**specified** for each day of  
the **FESTIVAL**. (NLT)



## Remember God's...

- **DELIVERANCE** from Slavery
- **PROVISION** and Direction on the Journey
- **PROTECTION** from Enemies

Psalm 103:1–5 (NIV) <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD, O my soul;  
ALL my inmost being, praise His holy Name.  
<sup>2</sup> Praise the LORD, O my soul and....

**FORGET NOT** all HIS Benefits

...who **Forgives** ALL your sins

...heals all your **Diseases**

...who **Redeems** your life from the pit

...**Crowns** you with love and compassion

...who **Satisfies** your desires with good things

...so that your youth is **Renewed** like the eagle's

# **OUR GOD...**

➤ **Forgives**

➤ **Heals**

➤ **Redeems**

➤ **Pours Out**

➤ **Satisfies**

➤ **Renews**

Daniel 9:16–19 (NLT)

<sup>16</sup> In view of all Your **Faithful Mercies**, Lord, please turn **Your furious anger away** from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain. All the neighboring nations mock Jerusalem and Your people because of **OUR sins** and the sins of our ancestors.

17 “O our God, **hear your servant’s prayer!**  
**Listen as I plead.** For Your own sake, Lord,  
**SMILE again on Your desolate sanctuary.**

18 “O my God, **lean down and listen** to me. **Open** your eyes and **see our despair**. **See** how Your city - the city that bears Your Name - lies in ruins. **We** make this plea, **NOT** because we deserve help, but **because of your MERCY**.

19 “O Lord, **Hear**. O Lord, **Forgive**. O Lord, **Listen**  
**and Act!** For **YOUR** own sake, do not delay,  
O my God, for **Your people** and **Your city**  
**BEAR Your Name.**”



<sup>12</sup> But many of the **older priests**, Levites, and other leaders who **had seen the First Temple WEPT** aloud when they saw the New Temple's foundation. **The others**, however, were **Shouting for JOY**. (NLT)

Philippians 3:13–14 (NIV)

...But **ONE** thing I do: **Forgetting** what is **BEHIND**

and **straining toward what is ahead,**

<sup>14</sup> **I press on toward the GOAL** to win the prize

for which God has called me heavenward

**in Christ Jesus.**

**My Name is I AM**

When you dwell on the Past  
with its mistakes and regrets

I am NOT there

My Name is not **I WAS**

When you focus only on the Future  
with its problems, doubts, and fears  
I am not there

**My Name is not I Will Be**

When you focus on Today  
and live **Obediently** in this **moment**

I Am Here

**My Name is I AM**