

A Pyramid of Praise

SCRIPTURE: Ezra 3:10-12

¹⁰ When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the Lord, as prescribed by David king of Israel. ¹¹ With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord:

**“He is good;
his love toward Israel endures forever.”**

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. ¹² But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. ¹³ No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

There are Roman pyramids, MesoAmerican, Chinese, Indian, but the greatest most infamous and some of the oldest pyramids are the great pyramids of Egypt. They have been imitated but never duplicated. The pyramid structure is so fascinating because it is a structure where the upper surfaces are triangular and converge on one point and the base is usually quadrilateral or trilateral (having 3 or 4 sides). That means that the base or foundation is wide and sturdy and the structure points upward.

Like pyramids God wants you and me to have a sturdy foundation and point upward.

In our scripture today God's people have returned after 50 60 years of exile in Babylon. The first thing on the agenda when they return to Judah is to rebuild the temple that was destroyed. Even before building their own houses...even though they hadn't been home in decades. Even though there was so much rebuilding to do...the first thing they wanted to build is God's house! While Ezra records Israel accounts of rebuilding the temple. Israel helps us to see how to build A Pyramid of Praise...

I. PRAISE IS PRESCRIBED

vs. 10 When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the Lord, as prescribed by David king of Israel.

- Priests were appointed by Moses in Levitical law and the Levites were appointed by King David
- David prescribed what praise is and how, when, and where it is rendered...
- Praise is prescribed.
 - Because we will praise something!
 - Israel knew what it was like to worship idols and the consequences...reason 4 EXILE

- Simone Weil said that we are wired to find central significance in something
 - Because we serve a worthy God!
 - Psalm 150, Psalm 100:4, Psalm 47:6
 - True worship is biblical not denominational...
 - Praise is prescribed privately & corporately.
 - Psalm 34 private and corporate vs. 1 (I will bless the Lord at all times his praise shall be on my lips) & vs. 3 (Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together)
 - GIVING GIFTS BASED ON WHAT PEOPLE LIKE...My wife's LOVE LANGUAGE!!! GIVE GIFTS
 - John 4:23 But the hour is coming and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship

There is a way....To get to Jesus, To worship, to praise, to have faith/believe, to love, to forgive

II. PRAISE IS PURPOSEFUL

vs. 11 With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord: "He is good; his love to Israel endures forever." And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.

- God's love endures because He is good.
- There should be a response or a reaction to God's goodness.
- When the priests and the Levites played together they made up a concert of music not to please the ear but to sing the everlasting hymn
- Their purpose was to praise God because the foundation was laid...
 - Several types of foundations for a house. (basement, crawl, slab)
 - All ensure the safety against the elements & weather, integrity of structure
- God is good and his mercy endureth forever...a firm foundation
 - It is our job to spread the gospel...The gospel is in his goodness & mercy enduring forever.
- Don't Know about you...
- Psalm 136 sang antiphonally -26 times in the chapter
- Conditional – good bad ugly and in between
- Foundation was laid they just cleaned and rediscovered
 - Updated, reestablished
- God get's the credit – He was the ONE and He is still the ONE
- Praise God for what he's done, He is faithful!!!

TSA if you see something say something!!!!

Praise is rendered to God for He makes all things possible!

III. PRAISE IS BUILT ON A PROMISE

vs. 12 But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy.

- The noise of praise is based on a promise!
- There were two groups here the shouters and the weepers
- Shouters were shouting on God fulfilling his promises of his love to Israel endures,
- Weepers were weeping because they remembered the good ole' days and they remembered what God had taken them thru because of their sin...
- Haggai the prophet; Haggai 2:9 The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory
- Corporate worship is noisy (*Acts 2:2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting*) and (*Revelation 19:6 "then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting, Hallelujah! For our Lord God almighty reigns!"*)
- Neither group criticized or told the other to stop.
- The shouters were excited about the future – the temple being built, God being faithful.
- The weepers were saddened by the memory of the former temple but praising thru their pain.
- Corporate Worship is loud because my praise is different than yours. But it is equally important heard and received...you can't tell my story!

LION KING...Look Simba everything the light touches belongs to Pride Rock and will eventually belong to you...

- Never leave nor forsake
- Never put more on you
- Weeping May endure for a night
- Look to the hills from whence
- Abide in me and my word
- Knock and the door shall be open , Seek
- Put on the whole armor
- He'll uphold you with his righteous right hand

We all have a new promise...the Glory of a New House!!!

CLOSING...

- **PYRAMID – plans had to be clear and concise so that many could read them for it took 20 or more years to build the pyramids of Egypt**
- **PYRAMID: were grave sites for Kings and Queens of Egypt and contained everything they needed for the after life.**
- **PYRAMID: were built with the greatest weight at the bottom**

The reason why the Pyramids have the greatest weight at the bottom is so that the structure can become narrow and point upward. Like the pyramids...**I WANT TO POINT UPWARD...I WANT TO POINT UPWARD**