

Biblical Drama based on Ezra 3:1-13

Character Parts: Narrators 1-7, Herald, Joshua, Local, Citizen, Zerubbabel, Worker

Narrator 1: When King Cyrus of Persia took over Babylon, he allowed the Jewish people to return to their homes. He even gave them permission to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

Herald: Hear ye, hear ye! Thus says Cyrus, the King of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel — he is the God who is in Jerusalem.

Narrator 2: So, many Israelites returned to their homeland and went together to Jerusalem. The priest Joshua, along with the other priests, rebuilt the altar of Israel's God.

Joshua: Come, let us offer sacrifices, following the instructions that God gave to Moses.

Narrator 3: Some of the people who were already living in the city didn't like what was happening. They didn't trust the newcomers, and they didn't want the temple to be rebuilt.

Local: Hey, what are you people doing?

Citizen: Were you given permission to do what you are doing?

Local: Won't we get in trouble with the people in charge of the kingdom?

Joshua: We are here with the permission of the king. You can't stop us from worshiping the LORD.

Narrator 4: Even though the work on the temple itself had not yet begun, the people started gathering together to pray and offer sacrifices on the LORD's altar both day and night.

Zerubbabel: Listen! King Cyrus of Persia told us that we could have cedar trees brought from Lebanon to Joppa by sea. Let us send grain, wine, and olive oil to the cities as payment for these trees.

Joshua: We will give money to the stoneworkers and carpenters who can start work on the temple and restore its foundations.

Worker: How soon can we get to work?

Zerubbabel: We can start right away!

Narrator 5: When the builders had finished laying the foundation of the temple, the priests put on their robes and blew trumpets in honor of the LORD. They praised the LORD and gave thanks as they took turns singing.

Joshua: The LORD is good! His faithful love for Israel will last forever!

Narrator 6: Their shouting and crying were so noisy that it was heard for miles around. It brought many of the people to tears.

Citizen: (*sobbing*) Why are you crying?

Joshua: (*sobbing*) I'm so happy! I never thought I would see the day that the temple would be rebuilt! Why are you crying?

Citizen: Frankly, I'm a little disappointed. The old temple was much better.

Zerubbabel: You will never be satisfied, will you? Let us rejoice. God is doing a great thing here!

Joshua and Zerubbabel: (*cheering*) Yeah!

Citizen and Local: (*jeering*) Boo!

Narrator 7: Everyone was so loud that the people could not distinguish between the cries of joy and the cries of sadness. All the people shouted out together, and the sound of the crowd was heard far away.