

slaves, then they probably did the hardest manual jobs.

**g. Unsure Jews (v.59-60)**

- 1) These were people who claimed to be Jewish born, but could not prove it.
- 2) They numbered 652. They did the work of builders.

**h. Unsure Priests (v.61-63)**

- 1) These were those who claimed to be of the priestly line but could not prove their heritage.
- 2) They could not do the work of priests until their heritage was proven.

**i. Servants, maids, singing men, singing women (v.65)**

- 1) These must have been personal slaves who worked and sang for their owners.
- 2) These servants made up 7,337 of the group.

📖 *God had a job for every kind of people. Every job was important and honouring to the Lord. So it is today!*

**2. Their Giving was Generous (v.69-70)**

**a. The chief of the fathers gave**

- 1) They offered freely or because they wanted to.
- 2) They gave after their ability (lit. their might) generously.
- 3) The total they gave in gold alone was 1060 drams. <sup>One dram</sup>  
= \$318 AUD x 1060 = \$337,864. They also gave silver.

📖 *God wants us to give willingly and generously as well. You cannot out give God. Those who do not give God at least a tithe tenth of their gross income rob God and lose God's blessing.*

**b. After they gave, they went to their inheritances**

- 1) The implication is that they gave to God before they built homes for themselves. They put God first.
- 2) Later we will see that they got too comfortable and neglected the work of the Lord.

**Conclusion:** God has a job for you in our local church. Have you found your job? Are you faithfully doing your job for the Lord? Some of you have and that is a blessing. If you have not found a job in our local church, ask the Lord for one or come see me and I can suggest one.

**Song:** Give of Your Best - 369

# God Has a Job for You!

3 September 2017 AM – Ezra 2 – EzNe17 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** If you are a Christian, God has a job for you to do. In the local church, there is something that everyone can do. It may be sweeping the floor or teaching a class or something in-between. The size and honour of the job is not as important as your willingness to do the job to glorify the Lord. If you are not a church member, joining the church will open to you even more opportunities for service. If you have not regular job in our local church, ask and I am sure we will find one for you.

In Ezra 1, we found a number of *faith fortifying facts*. Isaiah and Jeremiah's prophecies were fulfilled. God stirred Cyrus' heart to let the Jews return to Israel to rebuild the Temple. God stirred the hearts of the people to want to return to Israel. Others including Cyrus gave generously for the project.

The second chapter of Ezra is one that is easier to skip over than it is to read since it is full of names. However, this chapter reveals to us numerous jobs occupied by that those travelling back to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel to help rebuild the Temple.

**Transition:** This evening as we look at the diverse people, the various jobs they had and their generous giving, it ought to motivate our hearts to get busy serving the Lord.

## 1. The People and Their Jobs were Varied

**a. Zerubbabel (v.2)**

- 1) Zerubbabel was his Hebrew name. According to several Bible dictionaries, his Persian name was Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1:8, 11; 5:14; 5:16; Hag 1:1; Mt 1:12).
- 2) *Morrish Bible Dictionary* states that because he had a Persian name Sheshbazzar he must have held some office in Persia.
- 3) *Fausset's Bible Dictionary* suggests that he may have been a governor or tirshatha in Persia. **Ancestor of** king Jehoiachin also called Jeconiah or Coniah. Jehoiachin was the second to last king of Judah.

- 4) He was the leader of the first group of Jews returning to their homeland. He supervised the huge building project.

Captivity and Return To Babylon: 606 / 597 / 586 To Jerusalem: 536 / 458 / 445
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- 5) Evidently, directly under his leadership were ten faithful men acting as his assistants.
- 6) The leadership job has its perks, but it also has a lot of responsibility and accountability. Men, you are to be the leader of your family. **Good leaders lead by example!**

#### b. The common people (v.2-35)

- 1) These are listed simply as *the children of* numerous fathers. They made up the bulk of the 42,360 people who returned.
- 2) These common people had no particular job, but they volunteered to return to help rebuild the Temple.
- 3) This group included male and female, young and old, educated and uneducated.
- 4) In that day as today, the common or lay people make up the majority of those in the Lord's service. They were the builders (Ezr 1:3, 5).
- 5) One thing they all had in common – they were willing to sacrifice of themselves to do the work of the Lord. They were willing to endure the hardships of the long trip back to Israel, about 1450 km. (see map) They were willing to leave the land they had grown up in to return to a land that was destroyed and overgrown for many years.
- 6) These people may not have had any special training or experience for the work that was ahead of them, but they had willing hearts to serve the Lord. God is looking today for men and women, young and old, who have willing hearts to serve Him.

#### c. Priests (v.36-39)

- 1) The priests were of the tribe of Levi and the direct descendants of Aaron the first priest.
- 2) There were four family lines of priests consisting of 4,289 priests in total.
- 3) Were these all priests or did the number include the

families of the priests? It sounds like the latter.

- 4) They were to oversee the spiritual activities of Israel.
- 5) They did the work of the priesthood to offer sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of the people.
- 6) Today in the local church, God has ordained the pastor to be the spiritual leader of the congregation.

#### d. Levites (v.40-42)

- 1) The Levites were all of the tribe of Levi which God chose to be the servants of the priests.
- 2) Among the Levites who returned we find three divisions: Ordinary Levites, singers and children of the porters.
- 3) The total of Levites who returned was only 341. It seems unusual that there were so few Levites compared to the large number of priests.
- 4) The Levites were the servants of the priests.
- 5) The ordinary Levites did many manual and maintenance jobs.
- 6) The singers were in charge of the worship music.
- 7) The children of the porters were the doorkeepers. Note Psalm 84:10.

#### e. Nethinims (v.43-54)

- 1) The Nethinims were people from non-Jewish origin.
- 2) They consisted of the Gibeonites and other Canaanite people who had surrendered to Israel.
- 3) God does not give us individual number, but there were 35 families included.
- 4) Nethinims were like temple slaves forced to gather wood and carry water for the work in the temple.

#### f. Children of Solomon's Servants (v.55-58)

- 1) The children of Solomon's servants were also non-Jewish people like the Nethinims, yet it seems that they were inferior to the Nethinims.
- 2) These may have been descendants of Solomon's slaves who worked cutting stone and timber for him (1Ki 5:13-15; 9:20-21).
- 3) With the Nethinims they all numbered 392. If the Nethinims and children of Solomon's servants were still