

ST PAUL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH



THE STORY

OUR JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF GOD'S STORY

SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2019



A Key Thought:

*Sometimes
when hope
seems dead,
God is about to
do something
really big.*



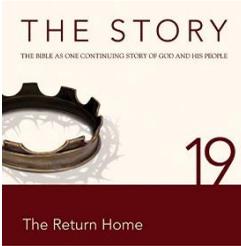
THE RETURN HOME

(Chapter 19)

God had promised to bring his people out of exile back to the promised land. After seventy years of captivity, God delivered on his promise. King Cyrus issued a decree to repatriate all exiles to their homelands while allowing them some degree of self-rule. And thus the people of Israel began their journey home. Under the guidance of the Hebrew leader, Zerubbabel, nearly 50,000 Jews returned to Jerusalem. They were intent on rebuilding, and the temple was the first priority. They rebuilt the altar and prepared sacrifices in accordance with the Law of Moses. At last God's people were again able to worship as God had instructed. The foundation of this humble temple could not compare to the magnificence of its predecessor, but the process had begun, and God was leading the way.

Read today's Bible passage from Ezra 3-4 on pages 264-265 of the *Story* book.

Contact **Dennis Clark** on **0438 895 056** with enquiries or if you wish to join a group



Read Reflect Relate to God and others

It had been 70 years since the people of Judah were first taken captive by the Babylonians. This long and painful season of discipline brought much needed change to the hearts of God's people. In the Lower Story, God brought them out of captivity again. He returned them to the Land of Promise where they rebuilt his temple and their lives. But the Upper Story once again rings with echoes of delivery from bondage. The Lord had redeemed his people from foreign captivity as God's great, over-arching plan continued unabated. This story of liberation and restoration is a poignant reminder that this world is not our home. Like Israel, we wait in joyful anticipation of our journey to a land of eternal promise where all things are new and home will be forever. While we remain on this earth, there will be occasion for both rejoicing and mourning, and we can expect to face hurdles in various forms. But God is always with us, and his promises to us will be fulfilled.

READ pages 263-273 of *The Story*.

REFLECT on these questions:



Have you experienced a time of “discipline” from the Lord, in which God was at work to reform or reshape you? What did you learn? In what ways were you changed?



In what ways can you relate to the return of the exiles to Jerusalem? In what ways have you experienced new blessings or new beginnings from the Lord?

RELATE –

Give some this week to reflect on the blessings of God in your life. Thank the Lord for them, one at a time.



FAITH ACTS IN THE HOME

13—19 OCTOBER 2019

This week's theme:

God keeps his promises – always!

*Every night in
every home ...*



SHARE

highs and lows



READ

a Bible verse or
story



TALK

about how the Bible
might relate to your
highs and lows



PRAY

for one another's
highs and lows



BLESS

one another

DAILY BIBLE VERSES

Sunday — Ezra 9:8

“Lord God, you have shown great kindness to us. You made us truly happy by letting some of us settle in this sacred place and by helping us in our time of slavery. We are slaves, but you have never turned your back on us. You love us.”

Monday — Joshua 23:14

“The Lord your God has kept all the good promises he gave you. Every one of them has come true. Not one has failed to come true.”

Tuesday — Isaiah 14:27

“When the Lord All-Powerful makes a plan, no one can stop it.”

Wednesday — Psalm 89:34

The Lord said, “I won’t break my agreement or go back on my word.”

Thursday — Numbers 23:19

“God is no mere human! He doesn’t tell lies or change his mind. God always keeps his promises.”

Friday — 1 Corinthians 1:9

God faithfully keeps his promises. He called you to be partners with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Saturday — 2 Corinthians 1:20

God has made a great many promises. They are all “Yes” because of what Christ has done.

- In what ways have people kept promises they made to you?
- God always keeps his promises. In what ways has God kept his promises to you? What promises of God are you still watching and waiting for him to keep?



*Mealtime
Prayer*

***PRAISE GOD, WHO HAS
DONE WHAT HE SAID.
WITH GOD'S LOVE WE
ARE SHOWERED, AND
WITH FOOD WE ARE FED.
THANK YOU, GOD!***

A BLESSING TO SHARE

***May God give you trust in his
promises. May they give you peace
and hope, each and every day. Amen.***

