

Exploring Ezra

8. Ezra 7: The Priesthood Released *Introducing Ezra the Man*

Aim: To consider the man Ezra, how God used him and how he might use us for his glory and to bless his people.

To Start With

Which Bible Characters or Christians do you consider to be 'heroes' of the faith? Why?

Engaging with the Text

Ezra the Man

Ezra generally is not on most people's lists of 'Bible Heroes' - in this study we will look at whether he ought to be - and how he might inspire those of us who are not 'famous' followers of Jesus!

Read Ezra 7.1-10

1. Make a 'mind map' of everything you can deduce about Ezra from these verses. (N.B. Make sure you pay attention to his genealogy!)

Read Ezra 7. 11-28.

2.
 - a) How would you describe Ezra's situation/experiences here?
 - b) How would you summarise the responsibilities he has been given?
3.
 - a) What does he attribute his 'good fortune' to?
 - b) How far do his personal actions appear to have contributed to the situation?
4. When have you been on the receiving end of an incredible blessing or opportunity that God opened for you?

Part of a Process

As we have studied in this series - Zerubbabel (a descendant of David) led the first wave to return and rebuild the temple. Haggai and Zechariah (the prophets) were used by God to inspire and encourage the people when they flagged. Almost a century later, Nehemiah (a high ranking administrator) came from Babylon to oversee the rebuilding of the city walls. In between came Ezra (the scribe and priest) to oversee the spiritual reestablishment of God's people.

5. What does this process of rebuilding Jerusalem and the people God chose to use to lead it teach us?
6. How might that shape the way we view what God is doing today in our society and church and what our part in that might be?
7. How might Ezra's character and behaviour inspire us as we try to serve God in our context?

Response

Spend some time thanking God for his amazing blessings and pray for each other that we would see clearly how God wants us to serve him with the opportunities and abilities he has given us.

