

SGQ Week of 2.17.19

Rebuild: *Redirect*

Ezra 7

Getting Started:

- 1) Share a personal story from “Snowmegeddon 2019.”

The Big Idea: We are finally introduced to Ezra in chapter 7. 58 years have elapsed since the completion of the temple at the end of chapter 6. Here’s a fun fact: *the book of Esther takes place between chapters 6 & 7.* Whereas Zerubbabel rebuilds the temple (and later Nehemiah rebuilds Jerusalem’s wall), God sends Ezra to rebuild his people. Ezra is convinced the nation will not flourish without embracing Scripture. Ezra models and teaches what this means.

Digging Deeper:

Read Ezra 7:1-28

- 2) The phrase “the hand of his God was on him” is used a number of times throughout this book. What do you think the phrase means?
- 3) Look at verses 9 and 10.
 - a) We are told *why* God’s hand was upon Ezra. What are we told?
 - b) How does this apply to people today?
- 4) Ezra is zealous for his nation to experience what he has. He receives the king’s permission to host a “*Back to the Bible*” campaign for his nation (vs.25-26).
 - a) Read Nehemiah 8:1-12 to get a glimpse of what this campaign looked like.
 - b) What observations do you have about this example?
- 5) Ezra lives out what he hopes his nation will. Ezra 7:10 tell us three to four things he did with Scripture. What are they?
- 6) We are told that Ezra “*set his heart.*”
 - a) What are some other translations of this phrase, and how do they help you understand what it means?
 - b) Instead of daily Bible reading creating pride or becoming a measuring stick for spiritual superiority, it should indicate a person’s self-awareness of great weakness. Explain.
- 7) Ezra set his heart to “*study the Law of the Lord.*”
 - a) The word “study” can apply either to a person trying to understand a book or to a love-struck couple trying to understand each other. What’s the same and difference with these two forms of “study?”
 - b) Our approach to the Bible should be more like lovers. How so?
- 8) Ezra also set his heart “*to do*” what Scripture says. When people think about lists of ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’ in the Bible, some either embrace legalism (“*I obsess about the*

rules to be accepted by God”) or license (“I’m casual with the rules because I’m already accepted by God”).

- a) Given what “study” means in the last question, discuss why both don’t work in a loving relationship.
 - b) How should this inform your approach to the Bible?
- 9) Ezra set his heart “*to teach*” God’s word to others.
- a) How many of you have given a formal sermon or taught a Bible class?
 - b) Share the different ways we can teach the Bible without giving a sermon or teaching a class?

Making It Real:

Commit to reading the Bible daily. Discuss ways to keep each other accountable. Pray for perspective and resolve.