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Cyrus Helps the Exiles to Return - Ezra 1:1-11

Topics: Challenge, Church, Commitment, Craftsmanship, Generosity, Gifts, Giving Up, God, Government, Guidance, Involvement, Possessions, Prophecy, Resources, Restoration, Teamwork

Open It

1. How do you think your view of the church is different from your grandparents'?
- * 2. When was the last time you felt there was something you "just had to do"?
3. What's something you have rebuilt, restored, refinished, or fixed up?

Explore It

4. Who was Cyrus? (1:1)
5. Why did Cyrus make his proclamation? (1:1)
6. Whose prophecy did Cyrus's decree fulfill? (1:1)
- * 7. What motivated Cyrus to make his announcement? (1:1)
8. What did Cyrus believe he was appointed to do? (1:2)
9. Who gave Cyrus the authority to build the temple? (1:2)
- * 10. What specific instructions did Cyrus give to the people? (1:3-4)
11. Who was to provide the materials to build the temple? (1:4)
12. Who went to Jerusalem to build the temple? (1:5)
- * 13. What motivated the people of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi to go to Jerusalem? (1:5)
14. What specific materials were provided to build the temple in Jerusalem? (1:6)
15. Where did King Cyrus get the articles that he provided for the temple? (1:7)
16. Who took all of the temple articles from Persia to Jerusalem? (1:8-11)
17. What had been stolen from the temple by Nebuchadnezzar? (1:9-11)

Get It

18. What does this passage reveal about Cyrus, the king of Persia?
19. What kind of relationship do you think Cyrus had with Israel and their God?
20. In what specific ways was Cyrus's generosity demonstrated to the Jews?
21. Why were freewill offerings necessary to rebuild the temple?
22. What specific acts can we do to show respect for church?
23. What role did God play in these events?
- * 24. What can you learn from this story about God's sovereignty over history?
25. How does this passage motivate you to pray for political leaders?
- * 26. When have you ever felt the Lord "move your heart"?
27. How have you seen the Lord change the attitudes or actions of a nonbeliever?
28. In what specific way do you need God to change the attitude of your heart?

Apply It

- * 29. What steps can you take to allow the Lord to work in you?
30. Who are two political leaders for whom you could pray this week?

The List of the Exiles Who Returned - Ezra 2:1-70

Topics: Citizenship, Commitment, Delegation, Evidence, Faithfulness, Family, Freedom, Generosity, Gifts, Heritage, Home, Money, Oppressed, Restoration, Tithing

Open It

1. If you had to be away from home (the place, not your family) for years, what would you first want to do upon returning?
2. What are some of the reasons people give to charity?
- * 3. What motivates you to give to your church?

Explore It

4. Why were the Israelites in exile? (2:1)
5. Where were the Jews held in captivity? (2:1)
- * 6. What did the Israelites do when they were released from captivity? (2:1)
7. How did the Jews keep the memories of their homes while in exile? (2:1-2)
8. Which families were unable to prove their Jewish heritage? (2:59-60)
9. Why were some of the Israelites excluded from the priesthood? (2:62)
10. The ratio of servants who returned with their masters was quite high (one to six); what does this reveal about the character of the Jews even while exiled? (2:64)
11. Why were freewill offerings given to the house of the Lord? (2:68)
- * 12. What did the Jews do when they reached Jerusalem? (2:68-69)
- * 13. How was the size of each family's offering determined? (2:69)

Get It

14. What can we learn from this passage about how to deal with difficult circumstances in life?
- * 15. What does this passage teach about the attitude we should have toward any place of worship?
16. How can you support your own church and its leaders?
17. How should we determine the size of our financial gifts to God's work?
- * 18. What gifts can we give to God besides money?
19. How do you feel when you tithe to the Lord?
20. In what specific ways do you think the Lord wants you to change your financial habits?

Apply It

21. What gift do you want to give to the Lord?
- * 22. What steps could you take in the next few weeks to make your spending, saving, and other uses of money an act of worship to God?

Rebuilding the Altar - Ezra 3:1-6

Topics: Actions, Celebration, Fear, Honor, Obedience, Preparation, Restoration, Sacrifice, Tithing

Open It

1. What do you think you would like or dislike about living in Old Testament times?
- * 2. What is your first memory of church?

Explore It

3. At what point in Israel's history did these events take place? (3:1)
4. Where did the Israelites assemble? (3:1)
5. Who began to build the altar in Jerusalem? (3:2)
- * 6. Why did the Israelites build the altar? (3:2)
7. What were the Israelites obeying by building the altar? (3:2)
8. What did the Israelites have to overcome to build the altar? (3:3)
- * 9. Why were the Israelites afraid? (3:3)
10. Of what were the Israelites afraid? (3:3)
- * 11. What did the Israelites do when they had completed their building project? (3:3)
12. Why did the Israelites celebrate? (3:4)
13. On what occasions was it appropriate to give offerings to the Lord? (3:4-5)
14. What happened after the Feast of Tabernacles? (3:5)
15. What had still not been completed at this point? (3:6)

Get It

16. What would you list as your three worst fears?
17. When have you had to overcome your fears to do what was right?
18. How does your fear of what other people think affect your obedience to the Lord?
- * 19. What does God want us to do about our fears and anxieties?
20. Why were the Israelites' sacrifices important?
21. Why do we not continue the Israelites' tradition of offering sacrifices on an altar?
22. What does this passage tell you about the sacrifice that Jesus made by giving His life for our sins?
- * 23. What and how does God want us to give to Him?
24. What do you think you can give to the Lord as an offering?

Apply It

25. How could you thank the Lord today for the gift of Jesus Christ?
26. What is one concrete action you could take this week to combat your fears?
- * 27. What kind of "sacrifice" can you give to the Lord as a freewill offering of praise?

Rebuilding the Temple - Ezra 3:7-13

Topics: Abilities, Accomplishments, Administration, Celebration, Differences, Emotions, Feelings, Foundation, Help, Involvement, Money, Needs, Partnerships, Praise, Restoration

Open It

- * 1. How do you feel when a friend or coworker compliments you?
- 2. What do you think prevents people from complimenting one another more often?

Explore It

- 3. Who was given money to begin restoring the temple? (3:7)
- 4. What was given to the people of Sidon and Tyre? (3:7)
- 5. What did the people of Sidon and Tyre provide for the Jews? (3:7)
- 6. Who authorized the transactions between the Israelites and their neighbors? (3:7)
- 7. When did the work on the temple begin? (3:8)
- 8. Who is listed in the passage as working on rebuilding the temple? (3:8)
- 9. Who was appointed to supervise the building project? (3:8-9)
- * 10. What happened when the foundation of the temple was laid? (3:10)
- * 11. What did the priests and the Levites use to praise the Lord? (3:10)
- 12. How did Israel praise the Lord? (3:10-11)
- * 13. What motivated the uprising of praise from the Israelites? (3:10-11)
- 14. How did the older leaders react to the laying of the temple's foundation? (3:12-13)

Get It

- 15. Why do you think there was such a mixture of emotion when the new foundation for the temple was laid?
- 16. Why is it significant that so many people were involved in rebuilding the temple?
- 17. When have you seen Christians work together to accomplish something important?
- 18. What important project would you like to accomplish with the help of other believers?
- 19. How would you describe in modern terms the celebration in this passage?
- * 20. How do you think Christians today differ in their praise to God as compared to the Israelites?
- 21. What usually motivates you to praise the Lord spontaneously?
- * 22. Besides words, what can we use to praise the Lord?
- 23. Why is God deserving of our praise?

Apply It

- * 24. What specific offering of praise could you give to the Lord today?
- 25. With what other believer could you praise the Lord?
- 26. Who is another Christian with whom you could join efforts in serving the Lord this next week?
- 27. What can you contribute to an important project or ministry of your local church?

Opposition to the Rebuilding - Ezra 4:1-5

Topics: Determination, Differences, Discouragement, Enemies, Fear, Help, Integrity, Involvement, Judging Others, Neighbor, Obedience, Opposition, Restoration, Testing, Unbelievers

Open It

- * 1. What comes to your mind as an example of an offer that seemed “too good to be true”?
- 2. When have you distrusted an offer of help or favor?

Explore It

- 3. For whom did Israel build the temple? (4:1)
- 4. What did the enemies of Israel hear? (4:1)
- 5. What is the setting of this story? (4:1-2)
- 6. What did Israel’s enemies do when they heard about the rebuilding of the temple? (4:1-2)
- * 7. Why did Israel’s enemies say they wanted to help build the temple? (4:2)
- 8. How did Israel’s enemies try to prove that they worshiped the Lord? (4:2)
- 9. How did the Israelite family heads respond to their enemies’ offer? (4:3)
- * 10. Why did Israel not want help in rebuilding the temple? (4:3)
- 11. What did Israel’s enemies do when Israel refused their help? (4:4)
- * 12. How did the enemies of Israel attempt to discourage the rebuilding of the temple? (4:4-5)
- 13. Why were counselors hired? (4:5)
- 14. How long did Israel’s enemies try to discourage them from their task? (4:5)

Get It

- 15. Why did Israel refuse their neighbors’ help?
- 16. What was wrong with Israel’s neighbors’ worship of the God of Israel?
- 17. Why is exclusive worship of God so important?
- 18. What tools do you think Satan uses against Christians?
- 19. When are you most vulnerable to temptation?
- 20. What tools can Christians use to guard themselves from sin?
- * 21. What distracts you from exclusively seeking and serving God alone?
- 22. Why was it important for Israel to rebuild the temple by themselves?
- 23. In what ways can faith be both personal and part of a group?
- 24. In what ways has your faith ever come under attack, been tested, or opposed?
- 25. What opposition have you experienced in your Christian walk?
- * 26. How does God want us to deal with long-term opposition from unbelievers?

Apply It

- * 27. What concrete action could you take over the next few weeks to protect yourself from discouragement or fear?
- 28. What specific steps can you take to insure you will not be distracted from serving the Lord?

Later Opposition under Xerxes and Artaxerxes - Ezra 4:6-24

Topics: Accusation, Actions, Administration, Authority, Criticism, Enemies, Government, Opposition, Power, Pressure, Punishment, Rebellion, Work

Open It

- * 1. In what ways does Christianity go against the flow of society today?
- 2. What sacrifices do you think Christians have to make for their faith?
- 3. What would you do if it were illegal to go to church?

Explore It

- 4. At what point in Israel's history did these events take place? (4:6)
- 5. Who lodged an accusation against the Israelites? (4:6)
- 6. Who wrote a letter to Artaxerxes? (4:6-7)
- * 7. Why did Israel's enemies write a letter to Artaxerxes? (4:8-16)
- 8. How was Jerusalem described in the letter to Artaxerxes? (4:12)
- 9. What danger was there in Jerusalem, according to Rehum? (4:13)
- 10. What motivated Rehum and Shimshai to send their letter to the king? (4:14)
- 11. What advice did Rehum give to the king? (4:15)
- 12. According to Rehum, what would the king's records reveal about the Jews? (4:15)
- 13. Why was Jerusalem originally destroyed, according to the letter? (4:15)
- * 14. What did Rehum and Shimshai's letter say would result from Jerusalem's restoration? (4:16)
- 15. How did the king respond to Rehum and Shimshai's letter? (4:17)
- * 16. Why did Artaxerxes order the Israelites to stop rebuilding the temple? (4:18-22)
- 17. What did the king's records reveal about Jerusalem? (4:20)

Get It

- 18. Why did Israel's enemies not want them to build a temple to the Lord?
- 19. What does this story reveal about the strategies Satan uses to thwart good?
- 20. How have you experienced opposition from others to your Christian faith?
- * 21. How should believers respond to opposition?
- 22. What can Christians do to protect themselves against Satan's attacks?
- 23. What can you do when it seems as if you have lost a spiritual battle?
- * 24. Why do you think God allows believers to experience failure?
- 25. What good can result from failure?
- 26. What lesson have you learned from a recent failure in your life?
- 27. How has this story affected your view of opposition or failure in the Christian life?

Apply It

- * 28. What specific steps can you take this week to protect yourself from Satan's attacks?
- 29. How could you encourage another believer who is struggling with a failure or setback?

Tattenai's Letter to Darius - Ezra 5:1-17

Topics: Accomplishments, Achievements, Answers, Authority, Consequences, Determination, Doubt, Enemies, Evidence, History, Opposition, Perseverance, Questions, Restoration, Teamwork, Work

Open It

- * 1. Under what circumstances do you find it difficult to persevere in doing what is right?
- 2. When have you faced opposition from others for doing the right thing?

Explore It

- 3. Who are the prophets in this passage? (5:1)
- 4. In whose name did the prophets prophesy? (5:1)
- * 5. How were Zerubbabel and Jeshua able to start rebuilding the temple again? (5:2)
- 6. Why did the governor and his associates approach Zerubbabel and Jeshua? (5:3)
- 7. What prevented the governor from stopping the work on the temple? (5:5)
- 8. Who sent a letter to King Darius? (5:6)
- 9. How did the governor describe Israel's God in his letter to the king? (5:8)
- 10. What did the letter to the king say about the Israelites' work on the temple? (5:8)
- * 11. Why was a letter sent to the king? (5:8-17)
- 12. How had the Jewish leaders responded to their enemies' questions? (5:11-16)
- * 13. How did the Jews view themselves and their work? (5:11)
- 14. According to the Jews, why was Israel handed over to their enemies? (5:12)
- 15. What had King Cyrus done for Israel? (5:13-15)
- 16. What did Tattenai request of King Darius in the letter? (5:17)

Get It

- 17. How is the Lord's hand evident in this incident?
- 18. How was God involved in protecting the Jews from their opponents?
- * 19. When have you experienced God's protection in your life?
- 20. What does this passage reveal about how Christians should view themselves and the work God has given them?
- * 21. What have you learned from this study about God's control over the events of your life, both good and bad?
- 22. What should be our response to opposition from unbelievers?
- 23. In what way did the Jews use their enemies' persecution as an opportunity for good?
- 24. When have you been able to share your faith in a difficult situation?
- 25. What difficult circumstance or challenge do you anticipate this week?

Apply It

- 26. How can you turn your next difficult circumstance into an opportunity to minister to others?
- * 27. How can you demonstrate your thankfulness to the Lord for His protection over you?

The Decree of Darius - Ezra 6:1-22

Topics: Administration, Advice, Affirmation, Answers, Approval, Authority, Celebration, Consequences, Craftsmanship, Enthusiasm, Generosity, Good News, Government, Help, History, Instructions, Joy, Leadership, Needs, Opposition, Possessions, Punishment, Restoration, Sacrifice, Serving, Teamwork, Work

Open It

- * 1. What do you think is valuable about studying history?
- 2. When have you discovered something about the past that has helped you in the present?
- 3. How has your study of Israel's history helped you in your own Christian walk?

Explore It

- 4. Why were the archives in Babylon searched? (6:1)
- 5. What was found in the archives of the Babylonian treasury? (6:2)
- 6. What decree had King Cyrus issued concerning the temple in Jerusalem? (6:3-5)
- 7. What specific instructions were given to those rebuilding the temple? (6:3-5)
- * 8. What order did King Darius give to Tattenai and his associates? (6:6-7)
- 9. What additional help did King Darius order the governor to give to the Israelites? (6:8-12)
- 10. How did the king insure that his edict would not be changed? (6:11)
- 11. How did the governor and his associates react to the king's decree? (6:13)
- * 12. Under whose instruction did the work of the Jews prosper? (6:14)
- 13. When was the temple in Jerusalem completed? (6:15)
- * 14. How did Israel react to the completion of the temple? (6:16-22)
- 15. Why were priests installed at the temple? (6:18)
- 16. When and how was Passover celebrated? (6:19-22)
- 17. How did the restoration of the temple affect those Israelites who had been involved in the unclean practices of their Gentile neighbors? (6:21)
- 18. Why was this Passover celebrated with such great joy? (6:22)

Get It

- 19. How do you think the Israelites felt when they heard King Darius's decree?
- 20. What causes Christians to drift away from the Lord as some of the Israelites did?
- * 21. What does this passage tell us about God's involvement in the lives of unbelievers and Christians alike?
- 22. How have you seen God's hand at work in the life of a non-Christian friend?
- 23. When has the Lord ever provided for your needs in a miraculous way?
- 24. How was Israel's celebration in this situation different from the way we celebrate our faith today?
- 25. Why do we not give sin offerings to the Lord nowadays?
- 26. What reasons do Christians have to celebrate?
- * 27. What is one thing the Lord has done for you that causes you to praise Him?

Apply It

- * 28. What is one tangible way this week you can celebrate what God has done for you?
- 29. What could you do this week to encourage a friend who has drifted away from God?
- 30. What are some steps you can take in the next month to guard yourself from drifting away from the Lord?

Ezra Comes to Jerusalem - Ezra 7:1-28

Topics: Abundance, Approval, Authority, Blessing, Courage, Desires, Devotion, Example, Generosity, Gifts, Government, Habits, Honor, Instructions, Involvement, Jobs, Leadership, Life-style, Mission, Opportunities, Position, Possessions, Power, Praise, Privilege, Responsibility, Teaching, Thankfulness

Open It

- * 1. What motivates people to be generous?
- 2. When have you experienced the generosity of others?
- 3. How do you think Christians should respond differently from unbelievers to success in life?

Explore It

- * 4. How is Ezra described? (7:1-6, 9-11, 25)
- 5. Why was the king so favorable toward Ezra? (7:6)
- 6. To what was Ezra devoted? (7:10)
- 7. Why had the king given Ezra a letter? (7:11-26)
- 8. Why was Ezra sent to Jerusalem? (7:14)
- 9. What gifts did the king give to Ezra to take to Jerusalem? (7:15-17)
- 10. What was Ezra supposed to do with the gifts that the king gave him? (7:17-20)
- 11. What order did King Artaxerxes give to his treasurers? (7:21)
- 12. What limits did the king put on his gifts to Ezra? (7:22-23)
- * 13. What motivated the king to give so generously to Ezra? (7:23)
- 14. How was Ezra qualified to appoint leaders to administer justice in the king's realm? (7:25)
- 15. What punishment did the king prescribe for those who would not obey the laws of God? (7:26)
- * 16. How did Ezra react to the king's giving him so much power and authority? (7:27)
- 17. Whom did Ezra credit for his success? (7:28)
- 18. What action did Ezra take in response to the king's letter? (7:28)

Get It

- 19. How would you describe Ezra?
- 20. How do you explain Ezra's great success?
- * 21. What character traits of Ezra would you like to have?
- 22. What blessings has the Lord bestowed on you?
- 23. What can we learn from Ezra's response to success?
- 24. How do you usually react when good things happen to you?
- 25. To what are you most devoted?
- * 26. How can you change your spiritual habits to become more devoted to God?
- 27. How do you think God would want you to change your priorities in life?
- 28. Why do you think God grants power and financial security only to some people?

Apply It

- 29. What specific steps could you take this week to thank God for the gifts He has given you?
- * 30. In what way can you give credit to God at this point for any successes you've enjoyed?

The Return to Jerusalem - Ezra 8:1-36

Topics: Accountability, Challenge, Circumstances, Confidence, Danger, Delegation, Depend, Environment, Faith, Fasting, Generosity, Gifts, Help, Needs, Plans, Possessions, Prayer, Protection, Reliability, Traditions, Trust, Wealth

Open It

1. What are some common dangers everybody faces?
2. How does the average person protect himself or herself from the dangers in life?
- * 3. What makes you feel safe?

Explore It

4. Where did Ezra and his traveling companions assemble? (8:15)
5. What was Ezra unable to find in his camp? (8:15)
6. Why did Ezra choose these particular men? (8:16)
7. Whom did Ezra send to Iddo and for what reason? (8:16-17)
8. What did the men ask of Iddo, the leader in Casiphia? (8:17)
9. Whom did Ezra credit for the men's success? (8:18)
- * 10. Why did Ezra proclaim a fast? (8:21)
- * 11. Why was Ezra ashamed to ask the king for protection? (8:22)
- * 12. How did God respond to the Israelites' prayers and fasting? (8:23)
13. Why did Ezra set apart twelve men? (8:24)
14. What was donated for the house of the Lord? (8:25-27)
15. What specific instructions did Ezra give to the twelve priests? (8:28-29)
16. How was Ezra's caravan able to travel safely between the Ahava Canal and Jerusalem? (8:31)
17. What happened on the fourth day after Ezra and his group arrived in Jerusalem? (8:33-34)
18. What did the exiles do upon returning to their homeland? (8:35-36)

Get It

19. Why would thieves have been more tempted to rob Ezra's caravan than others?
20. How did Ezra show his own faith in God's protective hand?
21. Why do you think Ezra chose to fast and pray on this occasion?
- * 22. What does this story reveal about God's protection of His people?
23. How did Israel demonstrate their thankfulness to the Lord for His protection?
24. What results have you experienced when you have fasted and prayed?
25. Under what circumstances do you think it is good to fast and pray?
26. For what danger or challenge in your life do you need God's protection or help?
- * 27. How does God want us to deal with fear and anxiety?
28. What should be our response whenever we experience God's protection or guidance?

Apply It

29. For what concern in your life do you want to fast and pray? When can you?
30. If you were to fast and pray on a regular basis, who is one person who could join you or help keep you disciplined?
- * 31. What steps could you begin to take this week to depend less on your own strength and more on God's power to help you through the challenges you face?

Ezra's Prayer about Intermarriage - Ezra 9:1-15

Topics: Accountability, Accusation, Confession, Despair, Disobedience, Emotions, Evil, Failure, Faults, Feelings, Grief, Humiliation, Humility, Marriage, Prayer, Punishment, Relationships, Sorrow, Unbelievers, Unfaithfulness, Weaknesses

Open It

- * 1. How much influence do you think your friends have on you?
- 2. Why do you think peer pressure is so powerful?
- 3. What would you say are the most important relationships in your life?

Explore It

- * 4. Of what sin were the Israelites guilty? (9:1-2)
- 5. What was wrong with the Israelites' not being separate from their neighbors? (9:1-2)
- 6. Who initiated a sinful practice among the Israelites? (9:2)
- 7. How did Ezra react to the news about Israel's sin? (9:3)
- 8. Who gathered around Ezra when he was grieving for Israel's sin? (9:4)
- 9. What did Ezra do at the evening sacrifice? (9:5-6)
- 10. Why was Ezra ashamed? (9:6)
- 11. How did Ezra explain the oppression Israel had experienced? (9:7)
- 12. In what way had the Lord been gracious to Israel? (9:8-9)
- 13. How did Ezra view himself in God's sight? (9:9)
- * 14. What did Ezra confess to God? (9:10)
- * 15. Why did the Lord not want the Israelites to intermarry with their neighbors? (9:11-12)
- 16. What blessing did God promise Israel if they obeyed Him? (9:12)
- 17. What did Ezra believe Israel deserved for their sin? (9:14)
- 18. Why did Ezra feel unfit to stand in the Lord's presence? (9:15)

Get It

- 19. Why do you think Ezra reacted so strongly to the news that the Israelites had intermarried with their neighbors?
- 20. What does Ezra's reaction to Israel's sin reveal about his character?
- 21. Why did God want the Israelites not to intermarry with their neighbors?
- * 22. In what ways do Christians need to avoid mixing themselves with the world?
- 23. What kind of relationships should Christians have with unbelievers?
- 24. What danger is there in associating too closely with someone who has different beliefs?
- * 25. What can we learn from Ezra about confession of sin?
- 26. How has God shown His graciousness and forgiveness to you?

Apply It

- 27. When can you take some time today for confession to the Lord?
- * 28. What specific steps can you take this week to sharpen your sensitivity to sin in your life?
- 29. How could you thank the Lord for His forgiveness?

The People's Confession of Sin - Ezra 10:1-44

Topics: Accountability, Actions, Advice, Commitment, Confession, Convictions, Disobedience, Emotions, Fasting, Feelings, Forgiveness, Grief, Guidance, Humility, Marriage, Mourning, Obedience, Reconciliation, Relationships, Repentance, Sin, Sorrow, Unfaithfulness, Wives

Open It

- * 1. How do you usually feel when you realize you've made a big mistake?
- 2. When do you tend to feel guilty?

Explore It

- 3. What was Ezra doing? (10:1)
- 4. Why was Ezra so upset? (10:1)
- 5. Why did a large crowd gather around Ezra? (10:1)
- 6. Why did Ezra wait for the Israelites to come up with their own plan to solve their problem? (10:1-2)
- 7. Who offered a ray of hope to the guilt-ridden Israelites? (10:2)
- * 8. What advice did Shecaniah give to the Israelites? (10:3)
- 9. What role did Ezra play in the repentance of Israel? (10:5)
- 10. Why did Ezra withdraw from the house of the Lord? (10:6)
- 11. How was the covenant the Israelites made before God enforced? (10:8)
- * 12. What specific instructions did Ezra give to the Israelites? (10:10-11)
- 13. How did the people respond to Ezra's call to repentance? (10:12-14)
- 14. Why was the Israelites' problem not resolved immediately? (10:13)
- * 15. How did the Israelites turn from their sin and reconcile themselves with God? (10:16-17)

Get It

- 16. In what specific ways did Ezra demonstrate his wisdom as a leader?
- 17. What character traits of Ezra would you like to see evidenced in your own life?
- 18. What can we learn from this story about how to deal with sin?
- 19. Why do you think it was necessary for the Israelites to take such drastic measures to deal with their sin?
- 20. Of what benefit was it for the Israelites to confess as an entire group?
- * 21. How has this passage changed your attitude toward sin and repentance?
- 22. Under what circumstances do you think it is wise to repent of sin in the presence of other believers?
- * 23. When is it wrong to feel guilty?
- 24. How do you think God wants us to feel after we have repented of sin?
- 25. In what specific ways should Christians separate themselves from the world nowadays?
- 26. What concrete action could you take to guard yourself against the world's temptations?

Apply It

- * 27. The next time the Lord convicts you of sin, what can you plan to do in response?
- 28. In what practical way can you limit the negative influence others have on you?