

The People, the Pastor,
and the Building:

The (Stumbling? Foundation?) Blocks
of Ministry

Ezra, Session II

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Ohio Tri-Synodical Rostered Leaders Gathering

Book Suggestions:

In An Age of Prose, Tamara Eskenazi
(1985)

Body Symbolism in the Bible, Silvia
Schroer and Thomas Staubli (2001)

Hebrew Refresher

כִּיד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי עָלַי

k'yad Adonai Elohai alai

The People

- “The Church would be great if it weren’t for all of the _____.”

People Outside the Community

- Tattenai, Governor of the Province
Beyond the River

1 Minute Context:

- In Ezra 1 the LORD stirs up the spirits, and *some of* the people return from exile to Jerusalem.
- In Ezra 2 there is a long list of returnees.
- In Ezra 3 the returnees lay the foundation of the Temple

1 Minute Context, continued:

- In Ezra 4, the “adversaries of Judah and Benjamin” oppose the building of the Temple, discourage the people, and the building stops.
- In Ezra 5, the people are encouraged by prophets and start building again, only to be opposed again, and to have a reprimand sent to their ~~bishop~~ king.

5 Minute Partner Up:

- Read Ezra 6 out loud together.
Mark what seems significant to you
- When you're finished, discuss:
 1. What could you preach?
 2. What could you teach?
 3. What could you pray?

People Within The Community

People Within The Community

- 1 Minute Context: Ezra 7

¹ After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of...the chief priest Aaron— ⁶ this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the LORD the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was upon him.

People Within The Community

Ezra 8:15 –

I gathered [the people] by the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found there none of the descendants of Levi.

People Within The Community

Ezra 8:16-17: “Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were **leaders**, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were **wise**, and sent them to Iddo, the leader at the place called Casiphia, telling them what to say to Iddo and his colleagues the temple servants at Casiphia, namely

People Within The Community

... to send us ministers for the house of our God. Since the gracious hand of our God was upon us, they brought us a man of discretion, of the descendants of Mahli son of Levi son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and kin, eighteen; also Hashabiah and with him...two hundred twenty of the temple servants.”

People Within The Community

Bible Study Break

- 1 Minute:
 - Who are your “leaders” you would call together?
 - Who are your “wise ones” you would seek out to figure something out together?

People Within The Community

Bible Study Break

1 Minute: Take 1 minute to pray for these leaders and wise ones

People Within The Community

Bible Study Break

1 Minute: Take 1 minute to listen for what the Holy Spirit is telling you about them.

The Pastor

- Oh, to have an Iddo...

The Pastor

“Our pastor would be great if she would just do _____.”

The Pastor

“Our pastor would be great if she would just do everything.”

The Pastor

- Oh, to have an Iddo...

The Pastor

- Oh, to have an Iddo...
- Family Systems and OUR (dys)function in the church

The Pastor

- Oh, to have an Iddo...
- Family Systems and OUR (dys)function in the church
- Honesty in mistakes—Ezra 8:22

The Pastor

- Oh, to have an Iddo...
- Family Systems and OUR (dys)function in the church
- Honesty in mistakes—Ezra 8:22
- *k'yad Adonai Elohai alai*

The Building

“Ministry would be great if it we could just get rid of our _____.”

The Building

- Find a reasonably friendly neighbor
- Read together Ezra 3
 - Your reactions?

The Building

- 1 Kings 8 – What was IN the Temple???

The Building

- Churches = Temple??

The Building

- Churches = Temple??
- Sort of...

The Building

- Churches = Temple??
- Sort of...
- Churches also = ebezers

“Come, Thou Fount of Every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory
fills my heart with joy and love;
teach me ever to adore thee,
may I still thy goodness prove.”

“Here I raise my Ebenezer,
hither by thy help I’m come
and I hope by thy good pleasure
safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.”

The Building

- Ebenezer
 - “eben” = stone
 - “ezer” = helper
 - “Stone of my help”

The Building

- Churches = Temples AND eben-ezers

- How does your building function as a Temple?
- How does your building function as an Ebenezer?
- Does your building function more like a Temple or an Ebenezer?
- Do you think the people of God in your community WANT a Temple or an Ebenezer?
- Do you think the people of God in your community NEED a Temple or an Ebenezer?

- Take 1 minute and pray to God about your church building, your people, your Temple, your Ebenezer.

- Take 1 minute and pray to God about your church building, your people, your Temple, your Ebenezer.
- Take 1 minute and listen to what the Spirit has to tell you about your church building, your people, your Temple, your Ebenezer.

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- Take 1 minute and listen to what the Spirit has to tell you about your church building, your people, your Temple, your Ebenezer.
- Tell the person next you what the Holy Spirit said.