

RESTORE

EZRA

RESTORE PT 3: THE OBSTACLE IS THE WAY

In his now classic book, author Ryan Halliday shares a story about an ancient King. According to legend, the king's people had grown soft and entitled. He decided to teach them a lesson because he'd grown tired of their apathy, laziness, and poor attitudes. His simple plan involved placing a large boulder in the middle of the main road, which would completely block entry into the city. The king wondered, "How will the people respond?" What would you do if this happened to you? Would you move the boulder or find another route?

Big Idea: Obstacles and opposition are often opportunities.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's the biggest obstacle you've faced? What benefits were you able to derive from it?
2. Is there anything so bad that it's not an opportunity? Anything so bad that it is utterly without benefits? Why? How do you know when to stick and when to quit?
3. Have you ever been impacted by teasing and name-calling? How so? How did you deal with ridicule from your nemesis: a) Plotted revenge? b) Formed an alliance? c) Gave in? d) cried for help? What happened?
4. Read [Ezra 4:1-5](#). What psychological ploy is used here against Israel? Did it work? Why did Zerubbabel and the others respond as they did? Cyrus reigned for 29 years. What was the impact of such prolonged opposition?
5. What clues tell you who has a part in God's work and who is opposed to him? Are such clues "presumption" or faith? How do we know if the opposition is from the enemy or God?
6. When has someone tried to wear you out or scare you away from completing a certain task? Did you continue or quit? Why?
7. Read [Zechariah 4:6-10](#). Is this vision meant to encourage or warn the people? What will it take for Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple? What does this say about how we will overcome obstacles and opposition?
8. According to the passages we've read, what "mountain" stands in the way of rebuilding the temple? How will Zerubbabel channel God's resources? What is the connection between worship in work regarding overcoming obstacles?
9. What is in the way of moving forward into the life God has called you to?
10. What is God saying to you through his word? How and when will you respond?