

# Facing Opposition

Ezra 4, 6:1-12 // January 30, 2022

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## CG LEADER'S DISCUSSION GUIDE

Open/close with prayer. Don't forget the announcements below!

Notes below are provided to help lead the discussion, not provide "the" right or complete answer in every case. Ample questions are provided; use as needed to lead your CG discussion.

### Ice Breaker

#### **#1 - What's your favorite story/movie/historical event about a person or people being victorious over all odds?**

There are a ton of examples in history, sports, movies, etc. but everyone knows the right answer is The Mighty Ducks. ;-)

### Into the Text (Read Ezra 4:1-6, 6:1-12 first)

#### **#2 - Who are the various characters and groups in this story? What do they want?**

Ezra, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, "people of the land" (those who were already in the land), various kings (Cyrus, Artaxerxes, Darius) and governors (Tattenai), prophets like Haggai and Zechariah.

#### **#3 - Why was it so important for the Exiles to rebuild the Temple?**

To re-establish true worship according to God's Word, to make it central, to be faithful in their faith.

#### **#4 - What various kinds of opposition did the Exiles face?**

Manipulation, compromise, discouragement, open hostility & threats, official obstacles & political oppression.

#### **#5 - God works through the Persian kings here powerfully on behalf of the Exiles.**

#### **What are other examples in Scripture of God working through unbelieving rulers to rescue His people or advance His plan of redemption?**

Pharaoh in the Exodus. King Herod and Caesar Augustus around the birth of Christ (Mt 2, Lk 2:1-7).

#### **#6 - What foreshadowings (pointers) of Jesus do you see in this story? How is this part of the Bible's story leading towards Christ?**

The return of the Israelites & the rebuilding of the Temple are paving the way for the Messiah to come to His people and fulfill God's promises.

### Application

#### **#7 - What opposition are you experiencing right now? *Especially opposition towards worship, obedience, and the mission of God.* Where do you need to be courageous?**

#### **#8 - In this story, God sent prophets, Haggai & Zechariah, to encourage God's people by His Word. What Scriptures encourage you in the face of opposition? (Cf. Haggai 2:4-5)**

As much as we love the stories and movies we listed at the outset, we know that we cannot be victorious in ourselves or through human motivation alone, but need God, His Word and His Spirit, to do what He's called us to do. Examples: Joshua 1:6-8, Psalm 18:1-3, Ephesians 6:1-20, etc.

*Let's pray for these things, about the oppositions we're facing & for the kind of courage the Bible calls us to & promises.*

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Redeemer Women – Wednesday, Feb 2nd 7-8:30 PM @ Redeemer Bloomington.
- Child & Family Dedication class – Saturday, Feb. 19th 10:30-11:30 AM @ Redeemer Bloomington.

Dedication – Sunday, Feb. 27th in both gatherings.

- Membership Class – Saturday, Feb 12th 10-11:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall.
- Baptism Sunday – Sunday, Feb 13th in both gatherings.
- Reminder:

- These events are all on the **Events** tab of the Redeemer app.

You can RSVP for specific events by going to the Events tab and clicking on an event and following the link to register.