Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Ezra 8

Trust and Obey

Getting Started

How can you look back and see God's sovereign grace at work in your life? Give one example.

Background

In ch. 7 we read about King Artaxerxes' authorization of Ezra's return to Jerusalem. In ch. 8 Ezra gives a second look at what was involved.

Digging In

1. **Read Ezra 8:1-14**. Approximately how many people were part of Ezra's party?

2. Who were Phinehas and Ithamar? (See Numbers 25:7 and Exod 28:1) What is the significance of mentioning their descendants?

3. **Read vss. 15-20**. What problem did Ezra discover when they camped by the Ahava Canal, and what action did he take?

4. **Vss. 21-30**. Why didn't Ezra ask the king for an armed escort? What did he do instead? (vss. 21-23)

5. What action did Ezra take to make sure that the silver and gold was delivered safely to the temple in Jerusalem?

6. **Read vss. 31-32**. How did God answer Ezra's prayer in v. 21?

7. **Read vss. 33-36**. What evidence do you see of God's sovereignty, and of human integrity?

8. How did the returnees show their gratitude and devotion to the Lord? (vss. 35-36)

Getting Personal

- **Read Ezra 7:6,9,28 and 8:18,22 &31.** What is Ezra emphasizing through these verses?

- How would you describe the interplay between God's sovereignty and human responsibility that we see in chs. 7-8?

- How are both of these at work in prayer, evangelism, and our growth in Christlikeness?

- In what ways are you cooperating with God's sovereign grace in your life?