



READING the OLD TESTAMENT

SUMMARY | Have you ever struggled with some of the things you find in the Bible? There are situations in Scripture that are hard to comprehend in today's context. The book of Ezra contains a perfect example of a difficult passage that can sound cruel and un-Christlike to us. In Ezra 10, Ezra prayed about cross-cultural marriages and instructed the men to get rid of their wives and children! Why?

Let's get back to basics as the Discover the Word team explores the question, "How do we read what we don't understand in the Old Testament?" Watch this week's video introduction to learn more.

This Week's Discussion Questions

1. Ezra 10:1–5 tackles many subjects that would be considered sensitive in today's climate.

What culturally challenging ideas stick out the most to you when you read this passage of Scripture?

2. Paul teaches that all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

As you reflect on the context of Ezra 10, what may be profitable for us from this passage today?

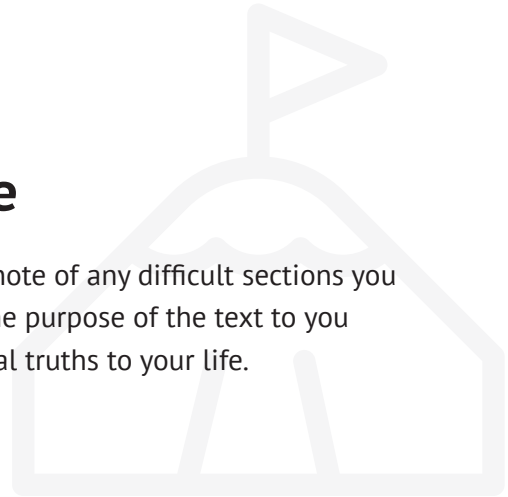
3. Some Bible text is prescriptive, meaning it gives a command or a remedy. Other passages are descriptive, giving a historical account of the times. How can understanding the differences in the tone of these passages impact the way you think of engaging with difficult passages of Scripture?

4. One opinion of the Bible is it's the big story pointing us to the coming of Jesus to rescue a lost world.

How does a text like Ezra 10 point to Jesus?

Challenge

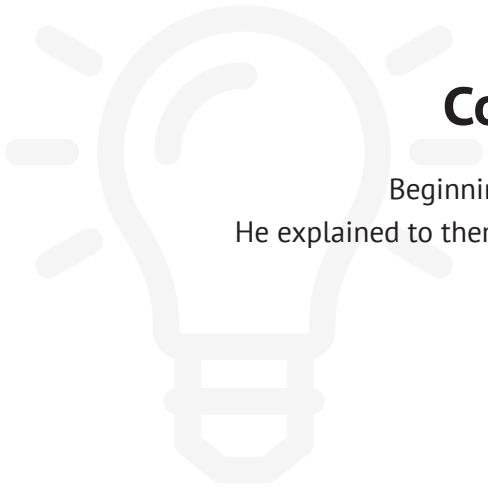
As you study this week's Scripture passages, take note of any difficult sections you encounter and prayerfully ask God to reveal the purpose of the text to you so that you may apply everyday biblical truths to your life.



Commit To Memory

Beginning with Moses and with all the prophets,
He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:27 NASB



Prayer

Father, I thank You for giving us the Scriptures to teach us about You and to reveal to us our own brokenness. Help us when we tackle difficult biblical texts to rest in the help of Your Spirit, who was sent to guide us into truth. May we with honesty and clarity display to the world the value of Your words.

Amen.

