



Class 16

2.6.19

In Class Videos:

Read Scripture Ezra-Nehemiah

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/ezra-nehemiah/>

Theme: Public Reading of Scripture

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/public-reading-scripture/>

Read Scripture Esther

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/esther/>

Reading:

Day 1 - Read Psalm 15, Read Ezra 1-6

Day 2 - Read Psalm 36, Read Ezra 7-10

Day 3 - Read Psalm 53, 54, Read Nehemiah 1-6

Day 4 - Read Psalm 89, Read Nehemiah 7-13

Day 5 - Read Psalms 133, 134, Read Esther 1-10 over the weekend

Reflection:

1. 2 Chronicles 36:11-21 describes the historical background preceding events in Ezra. Read the verses and summarize what happened.
2. Read Ezra 4:11- 16 and list some accusations the opposition force made against the Jews. What proof did they offer? List other Bible examples you can think of in which God's people were falsely accused or harassed to hinder their work for God. Now list some accusations people sometimes make against God's people today to discourage and discredit us.
3. What prophets spoke to the Jews about their work on the temple? See Ezra 5:1. When did this occur according to Haggai 1:1? Read Haggai 1:1-11. Isn't reading scripture in light of scripture cool? According to Haggai, why had the work on the temple stopped? What had people been doing instead? What did Haggai say the people should do? What lessons should we learn from the people's failure to work? How are people today sometimes similarly guilty?

4. How did Nehemiah begin his prayer to God in Nehemiah 1:5-11? What can we learn about approaching our Holy God in prayer from his? What occupation did Nehemiah have (verse 11)? What did he request in his prayer – 1:10,11? Read Nehemiah 2:4-5, what did Nehemiah do before answering the king's inquiry? What did he say to the king?

5. Read Nehemiah 8:3-6. What did Ezra do? What did the people do? What do we do today when God's law is read and studied? What should we do? What did the people say and do after hearing the law (v6)? Based on 8:1-8, list some important lessons we can learn about teaching and studying God's word.

6. What did Mordecai warn Esther about in Esther 4:13? In what sense is this also true of us if we fail to serve God? What did Mordecai say would happen if Esther did not speak up – 4:14? On what basis could he know this to be true? Explain Mordecai's statement: "Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Do we always know what purpose God may have for putting us in a certain position? Ask him how He can use you in your current situations and ask Him to use you in future ones.

7. The book of Esther has been called the “godless book” because God’s name is never mentioned. Prayer, the Law, sacrifices and temple worship are also conspicuously absent. Where can you find God’s supernatural blessings in the story anyway?

8. Three men played important roles in the rebuilding of Jerusalem: Zerubbabel, the prince, who represented the political side; Ezra, a priest and scribe; and finally Nehemiah, the layman. Nehemiah had a good government job in Persia. As the cupbearer to the king, he needed to be a moral, honest man or else he would be susceptible to bribery. He held the king’s highest trust. Easily, Nehemiah could have been concerned about Jerusalem from afar and remained in Persia. So, a normal guy who if he didn’t step out in faith, we may never have heard of...The rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem was a huge project. What Nehemiah did was a tremendous thing, and it was a wonderful testimony of God working through individuals. It was hard work, and it took a lot of people. Many made significant sacrifices for God. God takes note of it all. Many unknown Christians will be called before the judgment seat of Christ and rewarded. You think of preachers and missionaries and other church workers as receiving the great rewards, but I think that some of the greatest rewards will go to some of the unknown saints who live for God in this day. Let this sink into your heart. Ask God to use you in big ways in your life as a layperson.