

# Discipleship University Bible Reading Guide

## Leaders of the Restoration (Hebrew Prophets III): Esther, Ezra 7-10, Nehemiah 1-2

(For class to be held on March 3, 2018)

### Read Esther 1-2 – The Royal Setting and the Selection of a New Queen

1. What seems to be the author's purpose for giving all the details of the riches and extravagance of the 180 days feast given by King Ahasuerus? \_\_\_\_\_. What city is the setting for the story of Esther? \_\_\_\_\_. How does the fall of Vashti provide a warning for the story of Esther? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What man favored Esther and helped prepare her best to win over the king? \_\_\_\_\_. Why is Esther 2:10 a potentially troubling verse? \_\_\_\_\_. In what kind of work was Mordecai possibly engaged in the king's gate? \_\_\_\_\_. What did Mordecai have opportunity to stop? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Esther 3-5 – Haman's Plot to Exterminate the Jews and Esther's Intervention and 1<sup>st</sup> Banquet

1. How did Haman receive the authority to pass a law for the destruction of all the Jews? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was Esther's first response to Mordecai's suggestion to appeal to the king to save her people? \_\_\_\_\_. What point did Mordecai make that changed her mind? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why didn't Esther make her true request at the moment the king extended the royal scepter? \_\_\_\_\_. What did she request instead? \_\_\_\_\_. Why did Haman prepare gallows for Mordecai instead of waiting for the death decree? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Esther 6-7 – The Great Reversal: The Honor of Mordecai, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Banquet, the Downfall of Haman

1. What led the king to finally decide to honor Mordecai for exposing the plot on his life? \_\_\_\_\_. Whose idea was used to honor Mordecai? \_\_\_\_\_. Why was this especially humiliating to Haman? \_\_\_\_\_
2. After Esther made her appeal and exposed Haman, how did Haman make things even worse for himself? \_\_\_\_\_. Who decided to inform the king of the gallows that Haman had built for Mordecai at that very moment? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Esther 8-10 – The Power of Mordecai and Esther, Victory and Celebration (the Feast of Purim)

1. What position was given to Mordecai? \_\_\_\_\_. Since the laws of the Medes and Persians cannot be changed, what was the only legal way to save the Jews from Haman's death decree? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, deputies and officers of the king help the Jews? \_\_\_\_\_. When the day came, the Jews killed 500 men in Shushan. What two requests did Esther make of the king at the end of the day? 1.) \_\_\_\_\_ and 2.) \_\_\_\_\_
3. What new Jewish feast day did Esther and Mordecai established by royal decree? \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Suggested Reading, *Prophets and Kings*, Chapter 49, pages 598-606

**Read Ezra 7-8 – The Decree of Artaxerxes to Build the Wall and Ezra’s Caravan from Babylon to Jerusalem**

1. What was Ezra’s area of expertise? \_\_\_\_\_. What year did Ezra gather a company of Jews to return to Judah? \_\_\_\_\_. What is Ezra 7:12-26? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is Ezra 8:1-20? \_\_\_\_\_. Instead of asking for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect their caravan in their travels, what did Ezra lead the people to do (see 8:21-23)? \_\_\_\_\_. What was the result? \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Suggested Reading, *Prophets and Kings*, Chapter 50, pages 607-617

**Read Ezra 9-10 – Ezra’s Reforms (regarding inappropriate marriages) in Judah and Jerusalem**

1. What huge problem was brought to Ezra’s attention after the weighing of the treasures and the offering of sacrifices by those who had recently arrived in Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_. How did Ezra show his shock and grief? \_\_\_\_\_. What kind of prayer did Ezra offer at the time of the evening sacrifice? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What did Shechaniah propose for Israel to be right with God? \_\_\_\_\_. What is the long list of names at the end of chapter 10? \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Suggested Reading, *Prophets and Kings*, Chapter 51, pages 618-627

**Read Ezra 4:5-23 and Nehemiah 1-2 – Artaxerxes Reneges but Then Sends Nehemiah to Rebuild the Wall**

1. How can Artaxerxes change of heart in Ezra 4:7-23 be explained? Why would a king so confident in Ezra change his perspective so drastically and order a stop to the rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why was Nehemiah so upset at the report from the men of Judah? \_\_\_\_\_. After confessing the sins of Israel, of what does Nehemiah remind God in chapter 1:8-9? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What requests of Nehemiah were granted by Artaxerxes? \_\_\_\_\_. Who did the king send with Nehemiah? \_\_\_\_\_. After arriving at Jerusalem, what did Nehemiah do for three straight nights? \_\_\_\_\_. After Nehemiah persuaded people to return to the work of rebuilding the walls and gates of Jerusalem, who showed up mocking and threatening them? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*\*Suggested Reading, *Prophets and Kings*, Chapter 52, pages 628-634