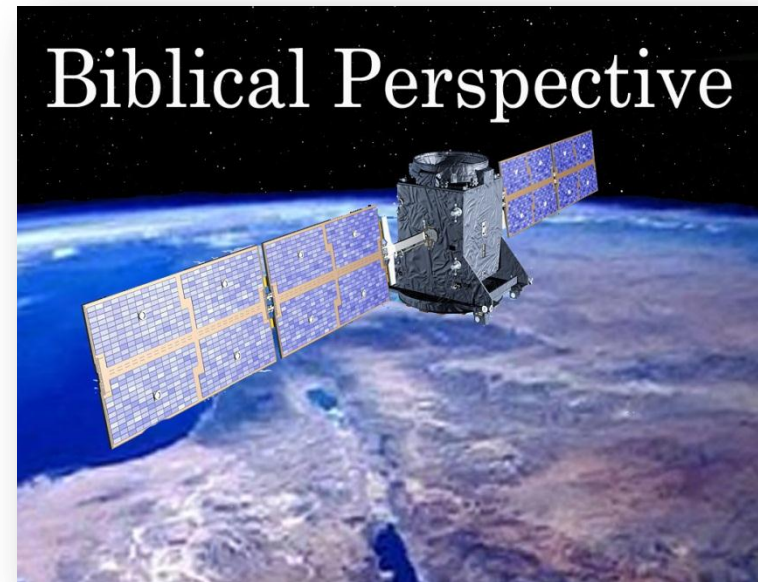


## Personal Application and Group Interaction:

1. Describe a time when you saw a famous site or attraction for the very first time.
2. When those who returned to Jerusalem laid the foundation of the Temple they were overwhelmed with joy and sadness (Ezra 3:1-13). They had fallen far from the glory days of God's kingdom under David and Solomon. What challenges are you facing in your spiritual life (sin, habits, compromise, repeated mistakes, lack of faith)?
3. Why was Ezra ashamed to ask the king for protection (8:21-23)? When have you faced a similar struggle?
4. Nehemiah was heartsick over the condition of God's people and the city of Jerusalem. So, he earnestly sought the Lord in prayer (Neh. 1:1-11). How has your prayer life grown as you agonized over the spiritual struggles of others?
5. What is the connection between your prayer life and your plans and actions (Neh. 2)? How does "accountability" and "planning" work when it comes to your prayers and what you do after you pray?
6. Esther's uncle Mordecai challenged her to be keenly aware of God's sovereign and providential plans when he said, "And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:16) Describe your own awareness of being chosen "for such a time as this." How can you relate to Esther's response, "And if I perish, I perish"?



## Profiles in Faithfulness

*Ezra 3:12-13*

Joshua, Judges, Ruth,  
1&2 Samuel, Kings & Chronicles,  
**Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther**

Pastor John  
2/17/2013

Today, as we continue to gain a broad understanding of the Bible, we will wrap up our brief study of the 12 books that tell the history of the Israelites.

Joshua led God's people after Moses died. They conquered the land God promised their fathers. Following the death of Joshua everyone did what was right in his own eyes and God used "judges" repeatedly to get them back on track. So, the people cried out for a king and God gave them their hearts desire. The kings ruled for almost 500 years. Most of them were evil. Idolatry plagued God's chosen people and God eventually judged His people by exiling them from the Promise Land.

Our study today spans those years in exile through the return of God's people to the land. It's an amazing story of courage, leadership, discovery and deep reverence for the One who is faithful. These are in fact, profiles in faithfulness.

## **Ezra**

**Purpose of the book of Ezra:**

**Theme of the book of Ezra:**

**Highlights:**

**Nehemiah:**

**Purpose of the Book of Nehemiah:**

**Theme of the Book of Nehemiah:**

**Highlights:**

**Esther:**

**Purpose of the Book of Esther:**

**Theme of the Book of Esther:**

**Highlights:**