



Series: Bible Survey

Lesson: 22. Nehemiah & Esther

- **Introduction to Nehemiah**

- Author: Much came from Nehemiah, but it was probably edited together by Ezra
- Date: Covers a 12-year term as governor starting in 445 BC plus a second, unspecified term; probably sometime before the end of the century
- Context:
 - Esther was Artaxerxes's stepmother, which may explain his favor toward Ezra and Nehemiah.
 - Nehemiah's high position in Artaxerxes's court gives him the opportunity to govern Israel and carry out rebuilding and reforms.
- Main themes:
 - The tension between reliance on God and taking action
 - Worldly opposition
 - Lived religion
 - Materialism
 - God's Word

- **Introduction to Esther**

- Author: Unknown
- Date: Covers 483–473 BC; probably written later that century
- Esther records the origins of the feast of Purim and has therefore been read at that feast in synagogues ever since.
- Context:
 - The first group of exiles had returned, but many Jews still remained throughout the Persian Empire.
 - God had blessed certain Jews with influence during and after the Exile, but there were people who resented them.
- Main themes:
 - Satan's attempts to destroy Israel
 - God' providential deliverance
 - Human responsibility and courage

Discussion:

1. What does Nehemiah 8 show us about how the Word of God is to be treated and taught?
2. Why do you think God is not explicitly mentioned in a book that features His providence?

FOR REFLECTION: How intense are your circumstances in life right now? Is your pursuit of God being affected by that?