



**LifeGroups**  
get connected.

# TRANSFORMATION

*"And we... are being transformed into His likeness."*

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

## CHETS TOP 5

Vacation Bible  
School Training  
May 2nd • 5:00 p.m.

Family Dedication  
May 8th • 5:30 p.m.

Chets Creek  
Update  
Fellowships  
May 15th, 17th and 25th

New LifeGroup  
Begins  
May 16th • 9:45 a.m.

Volunteer  
Celebration  
May 23rd • 6:00 p.m.

## Discussion Guide

### Life Sentences - "Esther"

***FOCUS: to examine the life of Esther and be challenged to be available to God in order to impact his/her world in the coming week.***

*"But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."*  
1 Corinthians 1:27 (NIV)

1. Outline the major characters in the story of Esther:
  - a. Xerxes –
  - b. Vashti –
  - c. Mordecai –
  - d. Esther –
  - e. Haman –
2. Who were the "somebody's" in the eyes of society in the above cast of characters?
3. What makes a person "somebody" in our culture today?
4. Who are the "nobody's" that have made great impacts in our society?
5. How did Queen Vashti lose her position of queen? (Esther 1:10-12)
6. How did Esther become the queen? (Esther 2:8-17)
7. How is God's plan played out in your life? What influences does He use to reveal His plan?
8. How did Mordecai save the king? (Esther 2:21-23)
9. What took place when Mordecai encountered Haman? (3:1-6)
10. Although the name of God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, how is His presence felt throughout the rest of the story?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
11. Esther showed tremendous courage facing the king uninvited. (4:16) She was prepared to die for her cause. How have you taken a stand for the cause of Christ?



**CHETS CREEK**  
CHURCH

4420 Hodges Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32224  
www.chetscreek.com  
904.223.5954

## Read Thru the Bible

*"How sweet your words taste to me; they are sweeter than honey. Your commandments give me understanding; no wonder I hate every false way of life. Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path."*

Psalm 119:103-105

May	Old Testament	New Testament	Psalm	Proverbs
2	Judges 1:1-2:23	Luke 20:1-19	54:1-7	12:19-22
3	Judges 3:1-4:24	Luke 20:20-40	55:1-8	12:23-24
4	Judges 5:1-6:10	Luke 20:41-21:19	55:9-14	12:25-26
5	Judges 6:11-7:25	Luke 21:20-38	55:15-23	12:27-28
6	Judges 8:1-9:21	Luke 22:1-23	56:1-7	13:1-2
7	Judges 9:22-10:18	Luke 22:24-46	56:8-13	13:3-4
8	Judges 11:1-12:15	Luke 22:47-71	57:1-6	13:5-6
9	Judges 13:1-15:8	Luke 23:1-19	57:7-11	13:7-8

### LifeGroup Prayer Requests:

*"You are not responsible for everyone in the church family - but you are responsible to them. So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind."*

1 Thessalonians 5:11

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## LOOKING TOWARD NEXT SUNDAY

### Ezra - Ezra 7:10

*Will discover four general abilities of godly leaders and will identify ways to implement these abilities in their lives.*

### MONDAY - MAY 3, 2010

#### Read Ezra 7:1-6 Who is Ezra?

*1 After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, 2 the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, 3 the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, 4 the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, 5 the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest- 6 this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.*

- Who is the King of Babylon during the time spoken of in these verses?
- What nationality was Ezra?
- Ezra was a direct descendant of Eleazar. Who was Eleazar's father? What position did Eleazar's father hold?
- What position did Ezra hold among the Jews?

## TUESDAY - MAY 4, 2010

### Read Ezra 1:1-3:7 The First Return to Jerusalem

*1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing: 2 “This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: “ ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. 3 Anyone of his people among you—may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem. 4 And the people of any place where survivors may now be living are to provide him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem.’ ” 5 Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites—everyone whose heart God had moved—prepared to go up and build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. 6 All their neighbors assisted them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with valuable gifts, in addition to all the freewill offerings. 7 Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the temple of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his god. 8 Cyrus king of Persia had them brought by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. 9 This was the inventory: gold dishes 30 silver dishes 1,000 silver pans 29 10 gold bowls 30 matching silver bowls 410 other articles 1,000 11 In all, there were 5,400 articles of gold and of silver. Sheshbazzar brought all these along when the exiles came up from Babylon to Jerusalem. (not all verses printed due to space)*

- The book of Ezra begins exactly where 2 Chronicles stops. Who leads the first return of the Jews in these first six chapters of the book of Ezra?
- Zerubbabel is called a “prince of Judah” and is a direct descendant of whom?
- Before actually beginning to rebuild the temple what did Zerubbabel rebuild? See Ezra 3:2
- What feast did they reinstitute before laying the foundation of the Temple?

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## WEDNESDAY - MAY 5, 2010

### Read Ezra 3:8-6:22 The Restoration of the Temple

*8 In the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers (the priests and the Levites and all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem) began the work, appointing Levites twenty years of age and older to supervise the building of the house of the LORD. 9 Jeshua and his sons and brothers and Kadmiel and his sons (descendants of Hodaviah [a] ) and the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers—all Levites—joined together in supervising those working on the house of God. 10 When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel. 11 With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD : “He is good; his love to Israel endures forever.” And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. 12 But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. 13 No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.(not all verses printed due to space)*

- The temple must be rebuilt if the Jews were to find their identity and reveal God to the world.
- What was the opposition to the rebuilding of the temple?
- Who opposed it being rebuilt?
- Which king gave a decree that the temple be rebuilt?
- A prophecy was given 70 years prior to the decree by what prophet of the Jews? See Jer. 25:1, 8-12.
- God sovereignly protects His people through a powerful empire while they are in captivity. Can you see God’s hand in delivering His people and keeping the descendants of David alive?

## THURSDAY - MAY 6, 2010

### Read Ezra 7:1-8:36 The Second Return to Jerusalem

*1 After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, 2 the son of Shalum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, 3 the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, 4 the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, 5 the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest- 6 this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him. 7 Some of the Israelites, including priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers and temple servants, also came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. 8 Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king. 9 He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for the gracious hand of his God was on him. 10 For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel. (not all verses printed due to space)*

- There is a 58 year gap between chapters 6 and 7 in the book of Ezra. What took place in this time period?
- Who led the second return of the Jews to Israel?
- While Zurubbabel restored the temple what did Ezra restore? See Ezra 7:10
- What king encouraged this second return of the Jews to Jerusalem?
- How can God's hand be seen in protecting the Jews during this return?

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## FRIDAY - MAY 7, 2010

### Read Ezra 9:1-10:44 The Reformation of the People

*1 After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, "The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. 2 They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness." 3 When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. 4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice. 5 Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the LORD my God 6 and prayed: "O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. 7 From the days of our forefathers until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today. 8 "But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. 9 Though we are slaves, our God has not deserted us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem. (not all verses printed due to space)*

- What happened that made Ezra mourn? Reread Ezra 9:1-9
- Did the people repent?
- Reformation must follow repentance. What reforms did Ezra institute as a result of their repentance?
- God used Ezra to rebuild the people morally and spiritually. Revival is a result of their repentance and response to God's covenant with them through Ezra.
- Is God asking you to repent of anything today?
- If so, what actions do you need to take in response to His correction in your life?