

Monday (Dec 15 <sup>th</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Nehemiah 11:1-36</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why do you think the people were so reluctant to settle in Jerusalem? Why did Nehemiah and the others deem it necessary to re-populate the “holy city”? With what recruitment policies?</li> <li>2. What labor divisions and family ties are evident from the descriptive notes with each set of residents?</li> <li>3. Why was it crucial that most folk live in villages and settlements outside Jerusalem?</li> <li>4. Would you be willing to relocate to the inner city, maybe forsaking your chosen field or ancestral home, to be of greater use to God and His kingdom? Why or why not?</li> </ol>
Tuesday (Dec 16 <sup>th</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Nehemiah 12:1-47</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How did the people celebrate the completion of the wall? What specific actions did the Levites and singers take?</li> <li>2. If you have or will have children—how would you like to be remembered by succeeding generations? What one thing are you doing regularly to help assure this happens?</li> <li>3. Review the lonely walk Nehemiah took around Jerusalem in chapter 2. How does that compare to the grand procession here?</li> <li>4. How are you, like Ezra and Nehemiah, finding, developing, and using God’s kingdom? Where would your gifts have placed you in their winning teams?</li> <li>5. What steps as an individual and as a community of faith are you taking to care for those who are serving the Lord as “priests, Levites, singers, or gatekeepers”?</li> </ol>
Wednesday (Dec 17 <sup>th</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Nehemiah 13:1-41</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note in this chapter (a) five references to definite actions taken to deal with unsatisfactory features in the conduct and condition of the people; (b) the way in which Sanballat and Tobiah succeeded at last in gaining a footing in Jerusalem. What may we learn from these?</li> <li>2. What is the most important thing you learned from Nehemiah? What life-changing application are you making?</li> </ol>
Thursday (Dec 18 <sup>th</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Esther 1:1-22</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What may we learn of the characters of Ahasuerus, Vashti, and Memucan? With which of the characters do you identify with? Why?</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Where in your life are you working on (a) Obeying authority? (b) Mutual respect? (c) Sharing (not showing) your wealth? (d) Being a host/hostess?</li> </ol>
Friday (Dec 19 <sup>th</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Esther 2:1-23</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By what steps did Esther become queen? Consider the events and the timing in terms of God’s overruling care for His people.</li> <li>2. How far should a Christian conform to the laws and customs of his country (ref. Dn.1:8; 1 Pet. 2:23-14)?</li> <li>3. Mordecai made no secret of his Jewish faith, yet advised Esther to remain silent. What does this teach us for our own witness? Why did Mordecai not obey the king’s command?</li> <li>4. If you were chosen to be queen or king, what would be the greatest asset or strength you’d bring to your country?</li> </ol>
Saturday (Dec 20 <sup>th</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Esther 3:1-15</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do we learn of Haman’s character in this chapter? See particularly verses 5-9 and 15. To what was he blind in the schemes that he made?</li> <li>2. In conflicts of conscience, are you more like: (a) Mordecai, a pacifist protester? (b) Haman, an enraged politician? (c) Xerxes, easily swayed or pacified? (d) The courtiers, dutifully bearing whatever new they are given? (e) The people, bewildered by it all?</li> </ol>
Sunday (Dec 21 <sup>st</sup> )	<p><b><u>Scripture: Psalm 78: 42-72</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The detail of verses 43-51 sets the people’s disobedience in bold relief. What other purpose do you think the verses had (ref. Ps. 103:2; 2 Pet. 1:9, 12, 13)?</li> <li>2. What disasters did idolatry bring upon Israel? How did God in His grace come to their aid? What does this action foreshadow?</li> </ol>

Acknowledgement: Alan M. Stibbs (General Editor), Search the Scriptures, and the [NIV Serendipity Bible](#) were used as a guide to prepare the above devotions.