New Song Learning Communities, Sept. 17-20, 2026

WHY LEARNING COMMUNITIES? ***Circle Two Opportunity…***

To become better and better disciples of Christ TOGETHER so we can face ***anything*** through…

1. Deeper learning of Biblical truth and 2. Stronger "iron sharpening iron" relationships

Ephesians 4:12–16 (ESV)

HISTORY COVERED – Ezekiel receives God's prophetic visions of hope in Babylonian captivity and Daniel's experiences and visions as serves as administrator in Babylonian empire (Nebuchadnezzer and Belshazzar) and Medo-Persian (Darius and Cyrus) empires.

BIBLE RECAP COVERED – Ezekiel 23-42; Sept. 10-16, Days 253-259, circa 573-539 B.C.

Ezek 43 The Glory of the Lord Fills the Temple, The Altar
Ezek 44 The Gate for the Prince, Rules for Levitical Priests
Ezek 45 The Holy District, The Portion for the Prince
Ezek 46 The Prince and the Feasts, Boiling Places for Offerings
Ezek 47- 48:29 Water Flowing from Temple, Division of Land
Ezek 48:30 The Gates of the City
Joel 1 An Invasion of Locusts, A Call to Repentance
Joel 2 Day of the Lord, Return to the Lord, Lord Had Pity, Lord Will Pour Out His Spirit
Joel 3 Lord Judges the Nations, The Glorious Future of Judah
Daniel 1 Daniel Taken to Babylon, Daniel's Faithfulness
Daniel 2 Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, God Reveals Dream, Daniel Interprets, Is Promoted
Daniel 3 Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image, The Fiery Furnace
Daniel 4 Nebuchadnezzar Praises God & 2nd Dream, Daniel Interprets, Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation & Restoration
Daniel 5 Handwriting on Wall, Daniel Interprets the Handwriting
Daniel 6 Daniel and the Lions' Den
Daniel 7 Daniel's Vision of 4 Beasts, Ancient of Days Reigns, Son of Man Given Dominion, Daniel's Vision Interpreted
Daniel 8 Daniel's Vision of Ram and Goat, Interpretation
Daniel 9 Daniel's Prayer, Gabriel Brings Answer, 70 Wks
Daniel 10 Daniel's Terrifying Vision of a Man
Daniel 11 The Kings of the South and the North
Daniel 12 The Time of the End

➔ *Questions or thoughts from this week's Bible Recap chapters?*

From Sunday's message. (Sunday messages are from chapters in advance of daily reading)

➔ **ESTHER** – about 50 years after the end of **Daniel** and **Cyrus'** the Jewish exiles go back to Jerusalem. King Xerxes (possibly Cyrus' grandson), understands Israel's favored position, but they have many enemies.

➔ *Turns out God DOES DO Drama… but of a different kind*

➔ *it is never about people but about GOD! God is **WAY, WAY, WAY BIGGER THAN** everything as He works His plan to Messiah, Who will bring salvation and restoration. But He partners with people who show us*

1. There is always a cost for obeying God

2. We have no idea of the ER & HR ripples from our actions

3. God is glorified through people when they obey in hard circumstances

THE PATTERN:

Ordinary people ➔ Hard circumstances ➔ Chosen by God ➔ Crisis of Belief ➔ SLO ➔ God wins and is glorified Earthly Realm and Heavenly Realm

THE STORY OF GOD'S DRAMA FOR US ALL:

The story of every person is WRITTEN, PRODUCED and DIRECTED by God. Following the Director, we are only given the next scene or line, only understanding the story after He puts it together

✝ We are ordinary people God chooses

✝ Our drama is God's set-up – crisis is opportunity for God to work toward an ending unknown to us

✝ Our responsibility is to Surrender, Listen and Obey – PERIOD.

WALK THROUGH THE BOOK OF ESTHER – what do you notice

*Ordinary people, living in a place they didn't want to be, doing things they didn't want to do through no fault of their own, forced to choose between protecting themselves or risking all to SLO **WITH NO GUARANTEES,** then experiencing God's work in extraordinary ways*

Esther 1 – God's pre-setup – Persian King Xerxes, Queen Vashti, making way for God's Presence thru Esther

Esther 2 – God's big plot setup – Esther becomes queen; Mordecai becomes a hero but unrewarded

Esther 3 – God's sub-plot setup – Haman plots to kill the Jews covertly from the King
Haman was an Agagite, likely a descendent of Agag, king of Amalekites, long-time enemies of Jewish people. God told King Saul to destroy the Amalekites centuries earlier (1 Sam. 15:3), but Saul failed. His disobedience led to loss of his kingdom and, in Esther's time, threat of annihilation for all Jews. *(www.gotquestions.org/Haman-the-Agagite.html)*

Esther 4 – Crisis of belief – Esther CHOOSES to approach the king to attempt to save the Jews, calls for people to fast and pray, willing to die if that is what obedience requires
✓ Requires trusting God without info or guarantees... ***obeying for the next line or scene***

Esther 5:1-8 – SLO actions, approaches at incredible risk, king welcomes, God prevents her from making her request, but she, Mordecai and the praying Jews don't know it is God, so they feel Esther has failed

Esther 5:9-14 – God's deeper setup to ambush – allows Haman and demonic powers to scheme, appearing they are on the edge of victory against Jews and their God

Esther 6:1-13 – God continues to setup His intricate ambush – king can't sleep, calls for some history to be read, "just happens" to be the account of Mordecai saving the king, king appalled Mordecai wasn't honored, enthusiastically decided to correct it, asks Haman for advice, Haman thinks king wants to honor him, Haman humiliated by assignment to honor Mordecai, knowing his plans are backfiring

Esther 6:14-7 – Esther reveals plot, king sees truth and walks out, returns at the exact moment Haman is falling on Esther's couch, Haman killed on gallows he built for Mordecai

Esther 8-9 – king and Mordecai devise plan to save Jews

Esther 10 – Mordecai serves God as second in power under the king

✝ God wins and is glorified Earthly Realm and Heavenly Realm

Chronological Guide: p 107, 115, 120-122, 138-141

Takeaways: