

# LEADERS IN ISRAEL



John Steel

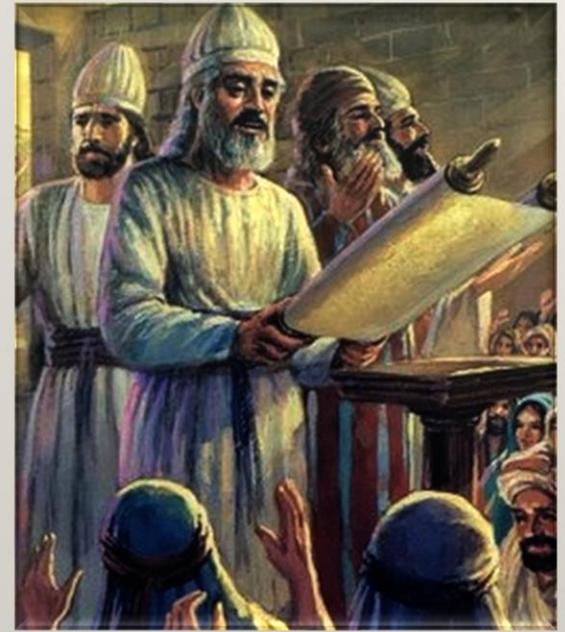
Lesson 13 for December 28, 2019

Leaders exert an influence on others, which can be either positive or negative.

Ezra and Nehemiah were two of the greatest leaders of Israel.

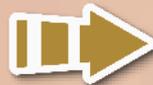
They contributed to improving Israel's relationship with God.

Let's learn from Ezra's and Nehemiah's leadership. We can become leaders who influence the people around us for the better.



Types of leadership:

- Good influence
- Bad influence



Ezra's and Nehemiah's leadership:

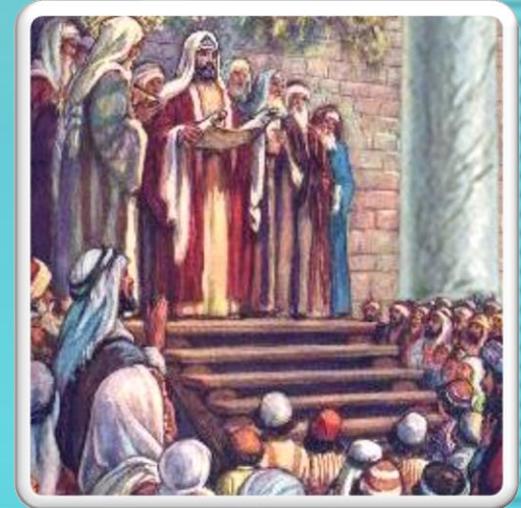
- Action and courage
- Bible study and encouragement
- Praying and trusting God
- Humility and generosity

# GOOD INFLUENCE

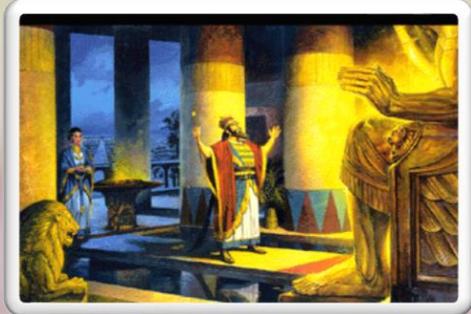
“Then the king [Josiah] stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to follow the Lord and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.” (2 Kings 23:3)

Leaders may make mistakes, but they can improve the spiritual lives of others by reflecting the principles and teachings of the Scriptures.

Let’s study the good influence of the next leaders:



LEADER	ACTION	RESULT	
	<p><b>Deborah</b> Judg. 4:1-16</p>	<p>She judged Israel and made a call to fight for liberation</p>	<p>Israel lived in peace for forty years</p>
	<p><b>Josiah</b> 2K. 23:1-10</p>	<p>He read the Law publicly and brought reformation</p>	<p>A great revival and reformation</p>
	<p><b>Peter</b> Acts 15:7-11</p>	<p>He defended Barnabas and Paul at the council</p>	<p>The church remained united</p>



# BAD INFLUENCE

“But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord [...] he behaved very abominably in following idols...”

(1 Kings 21:25-26)

The influence of bad leaders on the people of God is disastrous. Some of the bad leaders repented (e.g. Jehoahaz or Manasseh), but they couldn't undo the damage they had caused (2 Kings 13:4; 2 Chronicles 33:13).

Let's study the bad influence of the next leaders:

LEADER	ACTION	RESULT
 <p>Rehoboam 1K. 12:1-16</p>	<p>He didn't listen to the people and acted in a smug way</p>	<p>Israel was divided into two kingdoms</p>
 <p>Jehoahaz 2K. 13:1-3</p>	<p>He didn't obey God and made Israel sin</p>	<p>The kingdom of Israel was subdued by Syria</p>
 <p>Ahab 1K. 21:1-16</p>	<p>He was selfish, unfair, fickle...</p>	<p>Naboth was killed, and the house of Ahab was destroyed</p>
 <p>Caiaphas Jn. 11:46-53</p>	<p>He was jealous of Jesus' power over the people</p>	<p>Jesus was crucified as a criminal</p>

E.G.W. (Medical Ministry, p. 164)

**“The man at the head of any work in God’s cause is to be a man of intelligence, a man capable of managing large interests successfully, a man of even temper, Christlike forbearance, and perfect self-control. He only whose heart is transformed by the grace of Christ can be a proper leader.”**

# ACTION AND COURAGE

"Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night." (Nehemiah 4:9)



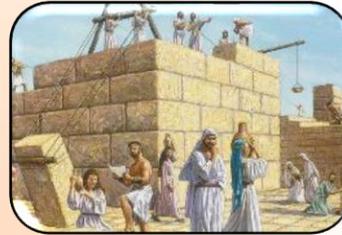
**Nehemiah's leadership was characterized by specific actions:**



**He encouraged the people**



**He assigned responsibilities**



**He delegated tasks**



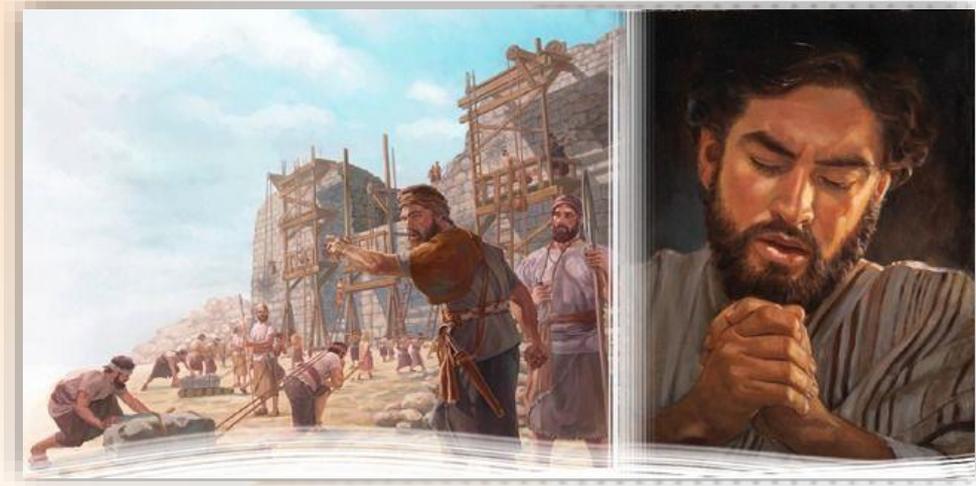
**He did his part in the work**



**He wasn't intimidated by his enemies**

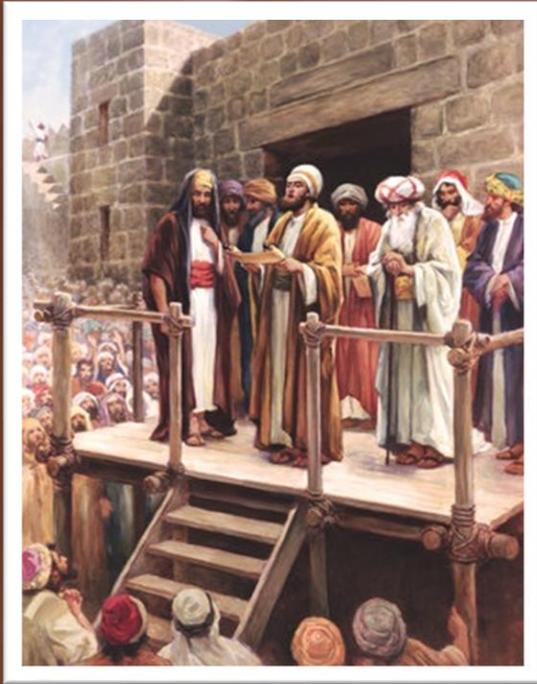
**The secret of a good leader is a strong relationship with God. That was Nehemiah's source of courage that strengthened him to overcome all the problems he faced.**

**His trust in God moved him to be proactive and to act according to his faith.**



# BIBLE STUDY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

“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.” (Ezra 7:10 NIV)



Ezra and Nehemiah had a vision of where they wanted the people of God to be, and then they put everything into accomplishing the goal.

Ezra did this through studying the Scriptures and teaching the people the Word.

Nehemiah encouraged the people to do what was right and to stand up boldly for God.

Both men wanted to see a people with a stronger relationship with God and who would fully trust Him.

They believed in God’s power and walked by faith to overcome every obstacle.

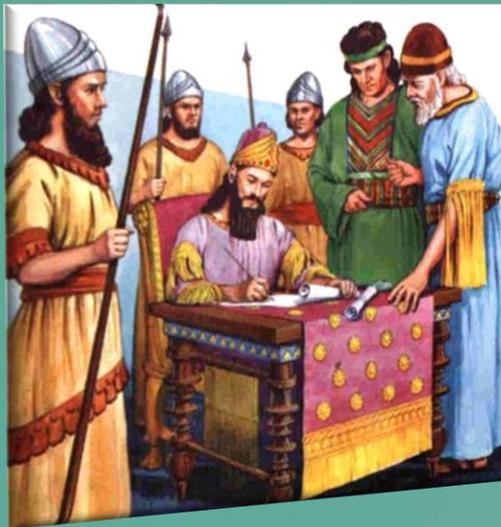


# PRAYING AND TRUSTING GOD

**"For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, 'The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him.' So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer."** (Ezra 8:22-23)

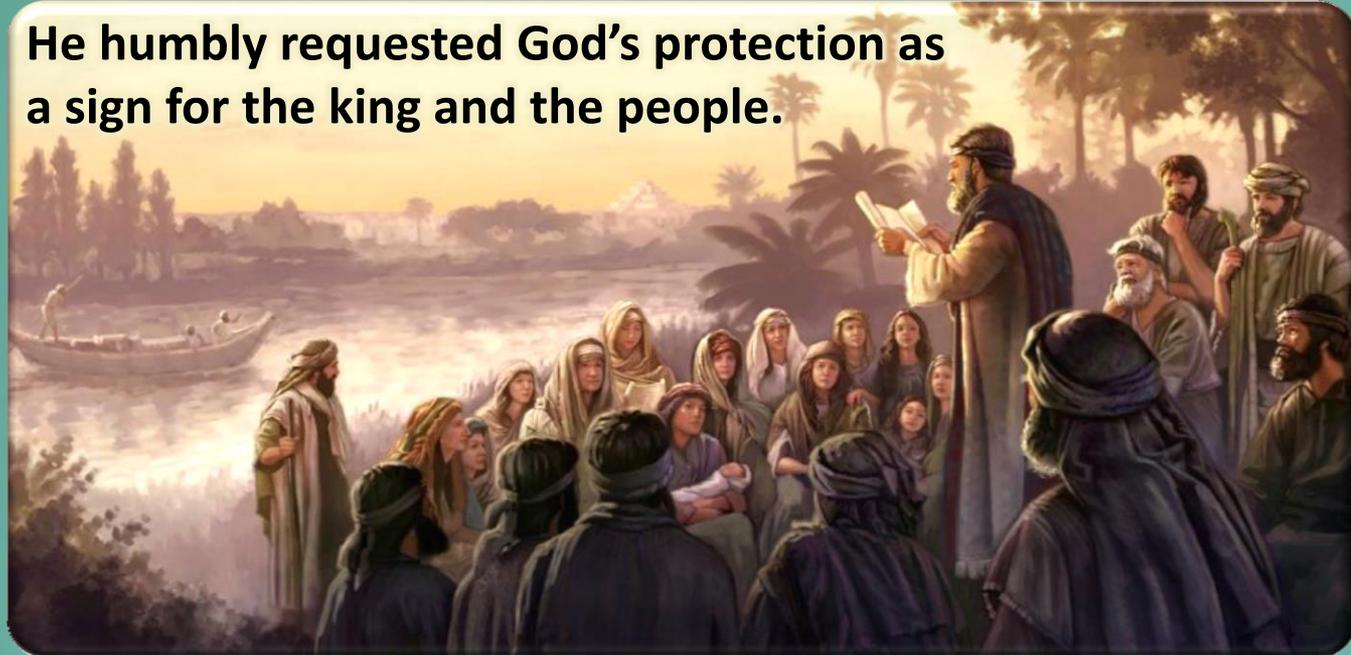
**Ezra had told Artaxerxes that God is powerful and helps those who seek Him. What would Artaxerxes think about God if Ezra asked for an escort?**

**Ezra's faith was tested. He fastened and prayed with the people to request God's protection in his dangerous trip to Jerusalem.**



**God answered Ezra's prayer.**

**He humbly requested God's protection as a sign for the king and the people.**



# HUMILITY AND GENEROSITY

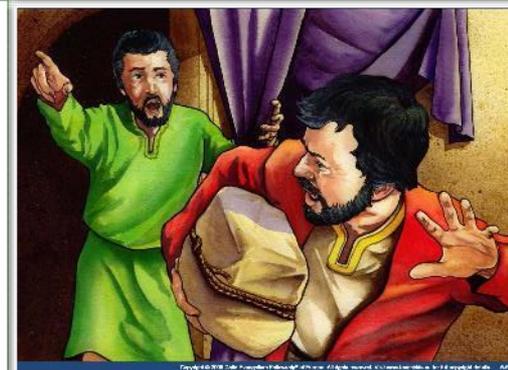
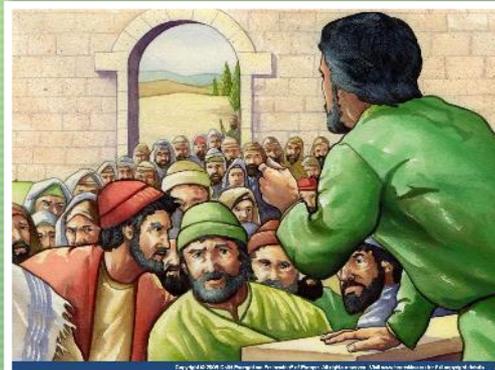
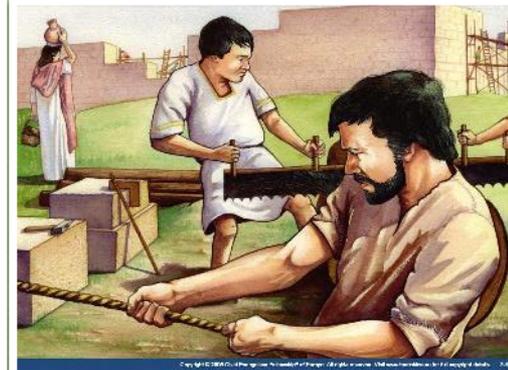
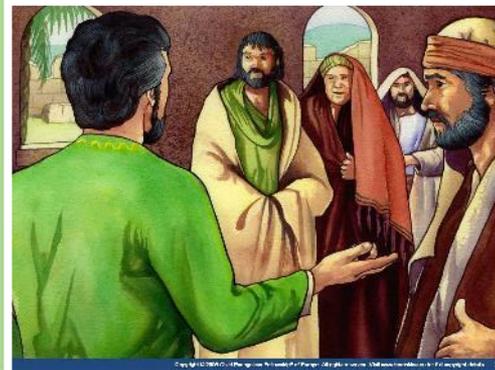
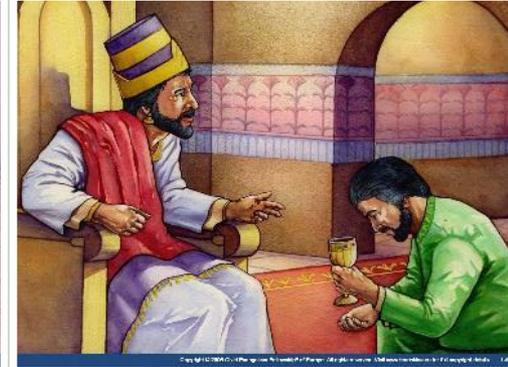
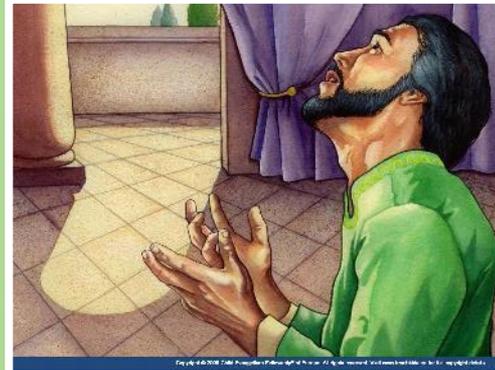
**“Indeed, I also continued the work on this wall, and we did not buy any land. All my servants were gathered there for the work.” (Nehemiah 5:16)**

**Nehemiah never used his privileges as a governor for his own sake (Nehemiah 5:14-19).**

**He humbly considered himself a servant of the people. He always put the community’s needs before his own.**

**This is a good example of the ideal of leader Jesus introduced: “whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave.” (Matthew 20:27)**

**Nehemiah was an exemplary leader, thanks to his faith in God, his prayer life and his dedication to God’s work.**



**“Men may be placed in high positions of trust in the cause of God, but they can claim nothing from Him unless they practice His word and rule in righteousness, seeking to copy the example of the meek and lowly Jesus. The leader in the work, as verily as the humblest lay member, is dependent upon God for power to exercise a pure, uplifting influence.”**