



## **Icebreaker:**

Who was your hero growing up– how did you try and imitate them?

## **Announcements:**

## **Prayer Time:**

Pray for our 2020 budget and transition into our new facility

## **Study Questions:**

Why do some people start life with so much promise but fall short of their potential? How can we squander our potential spiritually? Why does this happen?

What do the following verses say about Israel's potential– what they need to do to reach that potential– what they need to guard against (Deuteronomy 10:12–16; 11:13–17)?

God gives us free will to follow Him or reject Him. What happens when we reject God– his blessings and protective hand? Who is ultimately responsible for the fallout when we declare our independence from God and things go bad?

Why are we so inclined to take the way outside the bounds of God's blessing– ie– the way of the "curse?" See Deuteronomy 11:26–27. What happened as a result of Israel's rejection of God?

God is always the God of second chances? How have you seen people turn their lives around by taking that second chance? How have you seen people reject God's offer? What happens when we reject God's offer of a personal relationship– see Romans 3:23–24; 6:23; 1 John 1:8–9

Read the story of God's dealings with those who opposed God's work and lied about God's people– see Ezra 4:6–7; 11–16. False accusations were made against the Jewish people– have you ever faced false accusations– what are some of the different ways people respond when that happens? How do the people in Ezra's day respond to the smear campaign– see Ezra 5:1–2?

How does Israel's persistent faith and devotion to God pay off– See Ezra 5:3–8; 17. Ezra 6:1–16? What do the following verses say about how we are not hopeless victims: 2 Thessalonians 1:3–7; 1 Timothy 5:24–25?

**Conversational Prayer:** Dear God help me...