

Manifest Destiny

Studies in Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther



The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

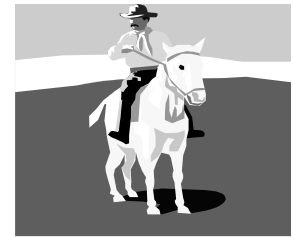
- **Worship**—You were planned for God's pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God's family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You

Reversal of Fortune

Introduction to Esther 8-10

In the 1991 award winning movie, *Reversal of Fortune*, wealthy socialite, Claus von Bulow, attempts to have his 2 murder convictions overturned. The show illustrates how we can be on top of the mountain one moment and on the bottom the next. In this week's study such a reversal of fortune occurred for Haman and for the Jews. Haman, who had been second only to the king, suddenly was hanged and everything he had was given to Esther, and then to Mordecai. The enemy who had had it all, had been plundered. Then, the enemy's plan was foiled. Although a royal decree had been given to destroy all the Jews, God used Esther to persuade the king to issue an edict that would overcome his prior one. His

decree was that all the Jews in every city should assemble to defend their lives, and to destroy, kill and annihilate the entire army of any people who would try to attack them—then they should seize their spoil. All of this was to occur on the 13th day of Adar, the day previously designated by Haman and the king to destroy the Jews. As this decree went out, and Mordecai left the palace arrayed in splendor, the dread of the Jews fell on everyone in the empire. In what was truly a reversal of fortune for the Jews, it was a day of "light, gladness, joy and honor" for them. When the time came to carry out the edict the Jews fulfilled it, with the exception that



Understanding how God's destiny for us is fulfilled.

they took no plunder from their enemies. After that day the enemy's reversal of fortune was celebrated, and became the annual Feast of Purim. This event would allow the Jewish people to celebrate yet another time when God providentially cared for them. Throughout the book of Esther God, as always, had truly been the one who had been the great reverser of fortunes for His people.

Daily Questions for Esther 8-10

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to www.celebrationnet.com/resources/leader resources)

<p>1. Read 8:1-2. List everything Haman lost (v1, 2). Who ended up with all of it? What can we learn from this?</p>	
<p>2. From 8:3-8 what did Esther request (v3, 5), what was her approach (v3-6), and how does this show growth? How did the king respond (v7-8)?</p>	
<p>3. In 8:9-14 what were the provisions of the new decree (v11-13)? How did this keep from violating the old decree, but still save the Jews?</p>	

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Esther 8-10 Study Questions (cont)

<p>4. Based on 8:15-17 how did Mordecai's exaltation affect the Jews (v15-16)? What was the ultimate result of the king's decree (v17), and what does this teach us?</p>	
<p>5. From 9:1-10 what happened to the enemies of the Jews (v2, 3, 5-10)? How can you explain such a dramatic reversal of feeling (compare Deut 11:25)?</p>	
<p>6. Looking at 9:11-15 what further request did Esther make to the king (12-13)? What happened (v14-15)?</p>	
<p>7. In 9:16-19 what days became the official feast days (v17-18)? How did they celebrate them (v19)? Why do you think they didn't take the plunder (9:10, 15, 16)?</p>	
<p>8. According to 9:20-28 what did Mordecai do (v20-21), and why did he do this (v22)? How would the feast's name (v26) help them remember what happened? Apply this.</p>	
<p>9. Using 9:29-32 how did Esther support Mordecai (v29), and what effect would this have? Why is it important to establish such commemorations?</p>	
<p>10. From 10:1-3 how are we to regard the story of Esther (v2)? How is Mordecai a good example for us (3)?</p>	
<p>11. Write down some lessons from the book of Esther—about God, about the part we play in His plan, and about how we, as God's people, should view our present circumstances.</p>	

Scripture to Remember

*"For how can I endure
to see the calamity which
shall befall my people, and...
the destruction of my kindred?"*

Esther 8:6 (NAS)

Celebration Fellowship

Help—Hope—Healing

We're on the web

www.thehospitalchurch.com

Life Group Questions—Caleb, Mountain Man (Joshua 14)

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)

1. Describe a person you know, or have known, that you would most want to be like? What do you admire about them?
2. How would you define character? Why is time required to build character, and why does it take time to reveal character?
3. Discuss how we, like Caleb, can increase our confidence through God's promise, power, and past performance. How have these shown themselves in your life?
4. Talk about some external or internal "grasshoppers" that you have to overcome, like Caleb. What about some "giants"? How can your group help you with these?
5. Where does impatience demonstrate itself in your life—with God primarily, or with others? Discuss how you can grow in this area.
6. Discuss anything else important to you from the message today if you have time.