

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

ESTHER SERIES

These questions are for the **March 18, 2018** sermon, "The Great Reversal." Please read the sermon passage (Esther 9:1-10:3) together out loud.

SERMON OUTLINE

WHEN GOD CREATES REVERSALS IN TRYING TIMES, NOTE HOW HE BRINGS ABOUT . . .

1. Real justice to counter evil intentions (9:1-15)
 - a. The wicked people who persist in opposition to God will experience justice.
 - b. While Haman has been removed from the scene, his wicked influence remains.
 - c. God provides a profound reversal . . .
 - i. The date Haman chose for unjust genocide is used by God as the date on which he provides ultimate vindication and protection, now celebrated as Purim.
 - ii. God is often later than you think he should be, but always right on time.
2. Lasting memorials to counter human forgetfulness (9:16-32)
 - a. God used Esther to deliver the Jews and to begin the celebration of Purim.
 - b. Note the evangelistic impact that God's deliverance brings in this world . . .
 - i. Persians declare themselves Jews for "fear of the Jews" (8:17)
 - ii. The Jews obligated themselves to keep Purim with "all who joined them" (9:27).
3. Surprising appointments to counter threatening conditions (10:1-3)
 - a. Consider how incredible it is that a Jew should be in the Persian palace.
 - b. Mordecai's influence continues to grow stronger and stronger.
 - c. And God keeps his every promise, with complete faithfulness.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: In this series we have learned that the human heart is wicked, and that those who do not turn to God (in Christ Jesus) will be judged, and that God is good and loving and just to do this. Do you rejoice that God is just and will hold unrepentant sinners accountable for their sins? How does this help you endure hardship with patience? How does the reality of God's coming justice motivate you to love others and share the gospel?
2. Based on #2, above: Purim has been celebrated for thousands of years, and stands as a permanent celebration that God saves his people (and keeps his promises!). Do you have any "lasting memorials" in your life? A date on the calendar that you celebrate when God came through with a major "reversal," showing his faithfulness and power? If you don't have a date, do you have a situation in mind? Tell us about it.
3. Based on #3, above: God often puts his faithful people in positions of influence. He calls us to pray for our leaders and those in influential positions (1 Timothy 2:1-4), and reminds us that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12). Without getting political, let's pray right now for God to raise up faithful believers and put them in positions of influence.