

ESTHER: A WOMAN OF STRENGTH AND DIGNITY

In the End, God Wins

Esther 10

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

All earthly woes, all financial pressures, all emotional trauma, all physical disabilities, all domestic conflicts, all international wars and rumors of wars, all plagues, and all demonic influence will one day cease.

God has promised victory for His people—a future when there will be no more hurting, crying, or pain. Until then, we can see in the Bible, as the record of God's history of redemption, foretastes of God's ultimate triumph.

Today as Chuck Swindoll informs our understanding and encourages our hearts, we'll see that *in the end, God wins!*



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

This twelfth *Searching the Scriptures* study on Esther closes the series on this wonderful book that magnifies the providence of God. By now, we can surely agree with J. I. Packer who wrote,

The doctrine of providence teaches Christians that they are never in the grip of blind forces (fortune, chance, luck, fate); all that happens to them is divinely planned, and each event comes as a new summons to trust, obey, and rejoice, knowing that all is for one's spiritual and eternal good (Romans 8:28).¹

Quotable

Amid the struggles and the storms and the battles and the sufferings of life, we always focus beyond us today and we see a triumph; we see a victory.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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Before we delve into *Esther 10:1–3*, let's retrace God's providence in the previous chapters of Esther. Write a one-sentence summary of each chapter, recapping the key events and themes. You can refer to Insight for Living Ministries' *overview* and chart for help.

Esther 1	
Esther 2	
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Before we study, let's pray:

Father, thank You for using Your power for my good. All good things come from You even when I don't recognize them. Please help me to have eyes to see and ears to hear, so I can perceive more clearly how You're working in my life. I pray You bless my time as I study this last chapter of Esther. In Jesus' name, amen.



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Observation

As we always strive to do when studying the Bible, let's begin with a slow observation of *Esther 10*. Read the chapter and write down any details you find important.

Record the five characteristics of Persia's new prime minister, Mordecai, mentioned in Esther 10:3.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Interpretation

Now let's explore what the text means. We'll answer the question *What is the author communicating?* Remember, during interpretation we consult commentaries and other resources to aid our understanding of the history and theology in the passage. Online, Thomas Constable offers free summaries and an extensive commentary. Look for Constable's Notes in the right reading pane of *Lumina*.



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What are two reasons why the author might have included the statement about King Ahasuerus in Esther 10:1?

You'll remember in the prior study the significance of record keeping in the ancient world and through the Old Testament narrative. How might Esther 10:2 validate the story of Esther as a whole?

Why would the author want to end with the description and influence of Mordecai?

When God rescued the Jews from Egypt, He formed them into a political state among the powers of the ancient Near East. But when Israel disobeyed God's Law, He dissolved Israel's unity and exiled them from their land. Why is it significant that the Jews can successfully follow God's will while in a foreign state?



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For the faithful Jews who were to be exiled with the unfaithful nation in the 590s and 580s BC, God comforted them with this word from Jeremiah,

This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem: "Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce. Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away! And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare." (Jeremiah 29:4–7)

This same command applies to the Jews who stayed in Persia instead of returning home at the decree of Cyrus in 539 BC. As Mordecai sought the good of his people and spoke for the peace of the Jews, he certainly pursued the welfare of Persia as Ahasuerus' trustworthy second-in-command.



Correlation

The Jews survived. Mordecai grew in honor and influence. God's people prospered. Their situation became a foretaste of the end of history. A few studies ago, we traced the theme *rest* through a few key passages. Let's do the same with the theme *peace* in Esther 10:3 (translated "welfare" in the NLT and NASB).

Each passage highlighted in the following paragraphs develops the theme *peace* (*shalom* in the Hebrew Old Testament and *eirene* in the Greek New Testament). Review and record how each author used the term.

When peace was lost in Eden, God began working to restore it through Noah and Abraham as well as Joseph and Moses. As He prepared the Jews to become a political nation, He gave them a conditional promise. How did Moses reference *peace* in [Leviticus 26:1–6](#)?



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As Israel and Judah refused to worship God and decided to follow their own religious machinations—silver gods on the walls and idolatrous prostitutes in the high places—God called them to turn back, but they refused. Review what *Jeremiah 8:11–15* says about this.

But the prophets didn't condemn without also offering hope. While God promised peace, conditioned on Israel's obedience to the Law of Moses, He uttered the unconditional promise that His people would be restored along with the whole world. How did Isaiah portray God's promise in *Isaiah 9:1–7*?

For the world to experience peace, people must first be at peace with God. So Jesus came to give peace to you and me as a foretaste of the peace that will one day fill the world when He returns. Review *John 16:16–33*.

Our peace with God through Jesus Christ is only the beginning. While not mentioned specifically in *Romans 8:18–25*, how does this verse paint a rich picture of the peace and glory for which all creation longs and which all creation will soon enjoy?



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After this brief correlation of the theme *peace* throughout biblical history, reflect on how this helps us understand the significance of Esther 10:3. Record your thoughts below.



Application

To end our study of Esther, we reflect upon what we have learned to help us live our new life in Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us strength and wisdom to believe God's promises and follow God's ways. Chuck has helpfully provided three principles to aid us in this last study on Esther.

Unexpected People

When God wins, He often uses unexpected people. In the past weeks, we read how God used Esther and Mordecai even though they were from lowly beginnings. God does not always look for the greatest names, those with the fullest bank accounts, or the most polished demeanor. He often works through ordinary people. Reflect on how you choose your friends—the people you like to spend time with.

Do you let those sneaky prejudices mentioned above creep into your social routine? What can you do to combat that kind of favoritism?

Jesus' cross equalizes all people, abolishing prejudice derived from an attitude of superiority. By living in the power of His forgiveness, peace, and renewal, we display that we belong to the people of God who loves everyone.

Unpretentious Qualities

When God wins, He usually upholds unpretentious qualities. Mordecai did not seek to make his name great, nor did he seek his own good. As a humble servant, he sought the good of his people. What qualities attract you to people? Oftentimes, it's those qualities to which we're attracted that we want in ourselves.



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Do you try to control or manipulate how others see you? Write down ways you can develop unpretentious, godly qualities in your life.

Universal Message

When God wins, the message He honors most often is universal. Mordecai didn't enjoy God's victory alone; many benefited from Mordecai's exaltation. God invites all to enjoy His victory, greatly contrasting the world's victories which often include looking out for number one. Remember that the gospel of Jesus Christ is good news extended to everyone.

What specifically can you do to help your church spread the message of peace through Jesus Christ? Can you serve the missions committee? Reach out to a new neighborhood? Speak peace into your own family? Write your ideas below.

Through the story of Esther, we learn how God works in uncommon ways through the common affairs of life. We see that God not only reigns as the powerful Sovereign, but He also governs as the beneficent King, exercising His providence for the ultimate good of His people. Remember His faithfulness, receive His peace, and rest in His sovereign control today.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, in Christ I have all I need. I ask that His peace remove all my anxiety, His wisdom guide all my plans, His presence subdue all my depression, His love flow through all my actions, and His hope carry me through all my woes. Let all people see, even in my withering flesh, a supernatural energy that operates according to Your good providence for Your good purposes. I pray this that Jesus may be glorified and my joy be full. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 56.



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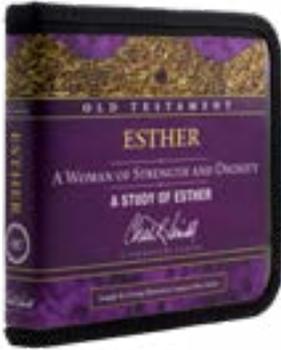
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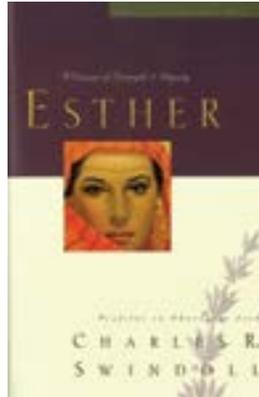
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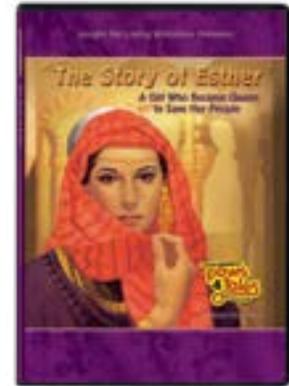
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For the 2018 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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