

STUDY

Esther Bible Study Questions and Answers (Free PDF)

An 8-session walk through Esther, from a deposed queen to the feast of Purim, with open questions for your own answers. Free to print, no sign-up.

An 8-session study of Esther for groups or solo reading.

For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?

Esther 4:14 (NIV)

Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.

Esther 4:16 (NIV)

Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther 2:17 (NIV)

The study guide

SESSION 1 • ESTHER 1:1-22

A Queen Deposed

At a lavish Persian feast, King Xerxes summons Queen Vashti to display her before his guests. She refuses, and her removal clears the throne for the woman God will use to save a nation.

1. What is happening at the king's banquet, and what does Vashti's refusal cost her?

2. Why do you think the book opens with the wealth and power of the Persian court rather than with the Jews who will become its center?

3. Where have you seen a closed door or an ending you did not choose turn out to be the start of something you could not yet see?

SESSION 2 • ESTHER 2:1-23

Esther Made Queen

Esther, a young Jewish orphan raised by her cousin Mordecai, is taken into the palace and wins the king's favor above all others. Mordecai, watching at the gate, uncovers a plot against the king's life.

1. How does Esther come to be queen, and what does Mordecai tell her to keep hidden?

2. Esther 2:17 says the king made Esther queen. Why might it matter that her rise looks like ordinary favor rather than an obvious act of God?

3. Where are you tempted to think God can only work through the dramatic, when he may be working quietly through your ordinary days?

SESSION 3 · ESTHER 3:1-15

Haman's Plot

Haman is promoted above all the nobles, and when Mordecai will not bow to him, his wounded pride swells into a scheme to destroy not just one man but every Jew in the empire.

1. What sets off Haman's rage, and how far does he decide to take his revenge in Esther 3:6?

2. How does one man's pride become a death sentence for a whole people, and what does that show you about where small sins can lead?

3. When someone has wronged you, where do you feel the pull to make the punishment larger than the offense?

SESSION 4 · ESTHER 4:1-17

For Such a Time as This

Word of the decree spreads, and Mordecai presses Esther to plead with the king. She knows that approaching him uninvited could mean death. Mordecai answers that perhaps she was made queen for this very moment.

1. What does Mordecai say to Esther in Esther 4:14, and how does she answer him in Esther 4:16?

2. Why does Mordecai believe deliverance will come whether or not Esther acts, and what does that say about how he understands God's purposes?

3. What is the place God has set you in right now, and what would courage look like for you there this week?

SESSION 5 · ESTHER 5:1-14

Esther's Banquets

Esther risks her life by approaching the king, who welcomes her. Rather than blurt out her plea, she invites him and Haman to a banquet, and then to a second, while Haman builds a gallows for Mordecai.

1. How does the king receive Esther, and why do you think she waits rather than making her request at once?

2. What does Haman's joy at the banquet and his rage at Mordecai reveal about a heart ruled by pride?

3. Where in your own life do you need the patience to wait for the right moment instead of forcing an outcome?

SESSION 6 · ESTHER 6:1-14

Mordecai Honored

Unable to sleep, the king has the royal records read aloud and learns Mordecai was never rewarded for saving his life. In a turn of perfect timing, Haman is forced to honor the very man he meant to hang.

1. What small detail begins the great reversal in Esther 6:1, and how does the timing of that night fall into place?

2. Why might the book linger over a sleepless king and an old record rather than an angel or a voice from heaven?

3. Where can you look back and see God's hand in a coincidence that felt like nothing at the time?

SESSION 7 · ESTHER 7:1-10**Haman's Fall**

At the second banquet Esther names Haman as the enemy plotting her people's death. The king's fury falls on him, and Haman is hanged on the very gallows he had built for Mordecai.

1. How does Esther finally make her plea in Esther 7:3, and how does the king respond?

2. What does it mean that Haman dies on the gallows he built for someone else, and what does that pattern show about how evil recoils?

3. Where do you need to trust God with justice you cannot bring about yourself?

SESSION 8 · ESTHER 8:1-10:3**Deliverance and Purim**

A new decree lets the Jews defend themselves, and the day meant for their destruction becomes the day of their rescue. The feast of Purim is established to remember it, and Mordecai rises to honor in the king's court.

1. How is the threat against the Jews reversed across Esther 8 and 9, and how does Esther 9:22 describe the day they were given?

2. Why do you think the people chose to mark their rescue every year with feasting and gifts to the poor rather than simply moving on?

3. What rescue in your own story is worth remembering on purpose, so that you do not forget what God carried you through?
