

*Esther*  
*Leader Guide*  
(NASB and ESV)

A MAN AND  
A WOMAN FOR  
SUCH A TIME  
AS THIS

*Esther Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)*

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## USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

### Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

### Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**  
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**  
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

### Using the Leader Guide with In & Out

#### When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

#### For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

<b>PRINTED PAGE NO.</b>	<b>L E S S O N S</b>	<b>PDF PAGE NO.</b>
1	LESSON ONE: <b>Esther 1–2</b>	5
7	LESSON TWO: <b>Esther 3–4</b>	11
13	LESSON THREE: <b>Esther 5–7</b>	17
17	LESSON FOUR: <b>Esther 8–10</b>	21

To locate a particular lesson in the pdf, click on  in the grey bar on the left side of the window. Bookmarks will appear for each of the lessons. Select the lesson you need.

## ESTHER LEADER GUIDE Lesson 1

### Lesson focus:

- Esther 1–2

### HISTORICAL SETTING

To begin your first discussion you can ask your group about the timing and setting of Esther.

When did the events of Esther 1 take place?

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of King Ahasuerus (Xerxes)

He ruled the Persian kingdom from his throne in Susa.

Use “The Times of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther” chart as a visual aid for this part of your discussion. Also, use the map when appropriate.

What main events in Israel’s history took place before the events of Esther?

Because of sin in Judah and Jerusalem by the people who didn’t listen to God’s messengers, His prophets, the Jews were exiled in three stages by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

Babylon destroyed the city and the temple; they took the people and temple articles.

The Jews’ exile or captivity lasted 70 years.

According to Daniel 5, the Medes and Persians conquered the Babylonians (Chaldeans). That same night, Darius the Mede received the kingdom. Cyrus the Persian reigned with him.

At the end of the 70 years, the Lord stirred Cyrus’s heart to proclaim that the Jews could return to build the Lord’s house in Jerusalem.

This was prophesied by Isaiah about Cyrus more than 100 years before Cyrus was born.

The timeline shows that the temple was completed prior to the time of Esther.

## ESTHER 1

What happened in this chapter?

*NOTE: If your group thoroughly discusses Esther 1 from this main question, then you don't need to ask any other questions. But if they don't, then you can ask some other questions like the following.*

### Verses 1-4

What happened and when?

King Ahasuerus ruled over 127 provinces in the kingdom of Persia and Media.

In his 3<sup>rd</sup> year as king, he gave a banquet / feast for his princes, attendants, army, and nobles. Then he displayed before them for 180 days

- the riches of his royal glory
- the splendor of his greatness

### Verses 5-9

What are these verses about?

The king then had a banquet / feast, for 7 days for all the people in Susa.

He seemed to want his entire kingdom to know how great he was, what a wonderful and rich king they had the privilege to serve.

Queen Vashti also gave a banquet / feast for the women.

### Verses 10-12

What happened in these verses?

The king wanted to display his queen's beauty also.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> day, when his heart was merry with wine, he sent for her.

But Queen Vashti refused to come before him and those gathered with him.

Then the king became burning angry.

Give time for your group to discuss if this kind of thing has happened to any of them or people they know.

Sometimes when not thinking clearly, people want to display what they have.

Consider what provokes this—pride, self-focus, feelings of . . .

You might also discuss how to handle refusals from others.

### Verses 13-22

What was the result?

The king asked counsel of his wise men, his seven princes of Persia and Media.

Memucan was the one who pointed out that the Queen had wronged all men in the kingdom.

The king and his men also thought that her refusal would be an example for all wives to refuse their husbands. There would be plenty of contempt and anger.

An edict /, royal order, was proposed and accepted that Vashti no longer be queen. She was deposed and she could no longer go into the king's presence.

It also stated that a man was to be master in his own house and was to be the one in the family who spoke the language of his own people.

*NOTE: Some who lived in the provinces of the Persian Empire were been brought there from other nations. Therefore, the language of a particular family could have been something other than Persian. Speaking the language of one's own people carried with it some authority over the family.*

The purpose of the edict / order was for wives to honor their husbands.

You might have some lively discussion about this, but keep it focused on what the Bible says here.

Don't let this get your discussion off track.

## **ESTHER 2**

What is the time of the events in this chapter?

Verse 16 says that it was the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus, 4 years after Esther 1:3.

There was at least a twelve-month period from verses 1-4 to verse 16.

You might direct your group to look at "The Times of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther" as a visual aid at this point. Maybe even note Esther 1 and Esther 2 on the timeline.

Verses 1-4

How does the story continue?

When the king's anger had subsided, he remembered Vashti.

- What she had done
- What was decreed against her

The solution presented by the king's servants was for beautiful young virgins to be brought to him. From them a new queen was to be selected.

Again the king took the suggestion from those around him.

Verses 5-7

Who is introduced in these verses?

Mordecai

A Jew

Great-grandson of one taken from Jerusalem into exile with King Jeconiah

Brought up his uncle's daughter

Took her as his own daughter

According to the timeline, which exile was this?

Mordecai's great-grandfather was taken in the second exile in 597 B.C.

Mordecai's family did not return to Jerusalem when Cyrus made his decree at the end of the exile.

*NOTE: If your group studied Ezra, they may mention that it was only those whose spirits God stirred who returned.*

Who else is introduced in these verses?

Esther

Hadassah—probably her Hebrew name

Mordecai's cousin

Parents dead

Beautiful

What word associated with Esther also described Vashti and the virgins the king was looking for?

Beautiful

The king wanted a beautiful wife like the one he had.

In chapter 1, he wanted to display Vashti's beauty.

Verses 8-11

What happened in these verses?

Esther was taken to the king’s harem as one of the beautiful young virgins.

Hegai favored her and gave her seven choice maids, cosmetics, and the best place in the harem.

According to Mordecai’s instructions, she didn’t disclose that she was a Jew.

Why might Mordecai have told Esther not to reveal her people to anyone?

Ezra 4:1-6

King Cyrus of Persia made a decree that Jews who wanted to return to Judah and Jerusalem after the 70 years of exile should go and rebuild the temple of God in Jerusalem.

Zerubbabel led the first group to return to their land.

When the Jews got there and began rebuilding, there were enemies who lived close around them.

They didn’t want the Jews to build anything. For years the enemies tried to frustrate or frighten the Jews to keep them from rebuilding.

They even wrote an accusation against the Jews in Judah to King Ahasuerus in the beginning of his reign.

That was only shortly before the events in Esther 2.

You might use “The Times of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther” timeline as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

Verses 12-14

What happened to the women taken to the harem?

12 months of beautification

6 months with oil

6 months with spices and cosmetics or ointments

1 night with the king

Taking with her whatever she wanted from the harem

Next morning

Returned to 2<sup>nd</sup> harem as a concubine

From then on, she was only with the king when he called for her by name.

Verses 15-18

What happened to Esther?

When her turn came, she used wisdom in taking with her only what Hegai advised.

Hegai was not the only one who favored Esther. All who saw her did.

Her turn was the 10<sup>th</sup> month in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of King Ahasuerus.

He loved and favored her and made her queen.

Great banquet / feast for Esther

Holiday (ESV—granted a remission of taxes) for all provinces

Gifts from the king

You might ask your group what they learned from their lists about Vashti and Esther.

Verses 19-23

How does this chapter end?

Mordecai sat at the king's gate, a place of prominence.

He heard of a plot against the king and told Esther who told the king in Mordecai's name. The plotters were hanged, and Mordecai's name was written in the king's chronicles.

To end your discussion, you might ask your group what they learned about God from Isaiah 44:24–45:7. How do these truths relate to the events in Esther and to the events in their lives?

## ESTHER LEADER GUIDE Lesson 2

### Lesson focus:

- Esther 3–4

### REVIEW

To begin your discussion you can ask your group how Esther 3 begins.

“After these things”

To review Esther 1–2 you can ask, “After what things?”

If they can’t review from memory, then use their At A Glance charts for this information.

#### Esther 1

King Ahasuerus displayed his riches and splendor.

He called for Queen Vashti to display her beauty, but she refused.

She was removed as queen.

#### Esther 2

Beautiful young virgins were brought to the king.

Esther was loved and favored over all and made queen.

Mordecai’s name was written in the chronicles.

### ESTHER 3

What is this chapter about?

Haman’s plot to destroy the Jews

*NOTE: If there is adequate discussion of the chapter with only this one question, then move to the next chapter. If your group needs more specific questions for discussion, then use some like the following.*

When did this happen?

Verse 7 says that it was the 12<sup>th</sup> year of King Ahasuerus.  
Five years after chapter 2, when Esther was made queen

If your group noted on “The Times of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther” when Esther 1 and 2 took place, then they might want to do the same for Esther 3.

#### Verses 1-6

Who was introduced, and what happened in these verses?

King Ahasuerus promoted Haman above all his other princes.

Mordecai refused to bow to Haman, even though the king commanded it.

You might ask what happened in chapter 1 when the queen herself refused to do what the king said.

She was deposed, and Mordecai knew it.

This tells something about a strong motive for Mordecai to disobey the king.

How was Haman described in verses 1 and 10?

Haman the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews

Discuss the cross-references which can relate to why Mordecai didn't bow to Haman.

#### Exodus 17:8-16

Amalek attacked Israel when they came out of Egypt.  
Joshua led Israel to win the battle, but the Lord said that He would have war with Amalek from generation to generation. He wanted Amalek's memory utterly blotted out.

#### Numbers 24:7

In this prophecy about Israel, Balaam said that Israel's king and kingdom will be exalted over Agag.

#### 1 Samuel 15

Saul, Israel's first king was told by the Lord to utterly destroy Amalek whose king was Agag. God said that He wanted to punish Amalek for what they did in Exodus 17.

Saul spared Agag, the king of Amalek.

Samuel, the Lord's prophet, confronted Saul and killed Agag himself.

*NOTE: Some might read in commentaries that Haman was not a descendant of this Agag.*

What was Mordecai's stated reason for not bowing to Haman?

Verse 4 says his reason was that he was a Jew.

Esther 2:5 says that Mordecai was a descendant of Kish, a Benjamite.

*NOTE: King Saul's father was named Kish, and he was from the tribe of Benjamin. Mordecai might have been a descendant of King Saul.*

What was Haman's reaction to Mordecai's refusal to bow?

Rage /, fury, and a desire to destroy all Jews throughout Ahasuerus's kingdom

#### Verses 7-11

What did Haman do?

He chose the day he wanted to carry out the destruction.

Pur, the lot, was cast to determine the day.

The Jews also used this method to discern the Lord's choice.

*NOTE: Verse 7 indicates that the lot was cast to determine the month and day, maybe by Haman's wise men. It probably did not mean that they cast the lot for a whole year.*

Then he went to the king with a plan to decree the destruction.

He was willing to pay 10,000 talents, a vast amount, to accomplish his plan.

The king gave him authority to destroy the people he told the king about.

It doesn't say that he told the king they were the Jews. He called them "certain people."

#### Verses 12-15

How does this chapter end?

On the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month, Haman dictated to the king's scribes what he wanted in the edict.

The edict was to kill, destroy, and annihilate all the Jews in one day, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month.

There were 11 months to send out the letters to the 127 provinces and make preparations for the destruction.

Haman and the king sat down to drink while the city of Susa was in confusion.

You might give time for your group to discuss what they learned about the three men in this chapter—the king, Haman, and Mordecai.

Ask what they learn from each that is appropriate for application.

You can note the main points on a visual aid as they are discussed.

#### **ESTHER 4**

What is this chapter about?

Mordecai told Esther about Haman's plan, edict

#### Verses 1-3

What was Mordecai's reaction when he heard of Haman's plot?

Public and bitter wailing / or cry

Some think that this is because he was the cause of the edict.

Sackcloth and ashes

These were signs of mourning, humility, and repentance.

Give time for your group to discuss what they learned about this from the cross-references.

What was the reaction of the Jews in King Ahasuerus's provinces?

Great mourning with fasting, weeping, wailing / lamenting, sackcloth and ashes

Give your group time to discuss what they learned from the cross-references about fasting.

Sometimes it was a sign of repentance and seeking the Lord, even for the Ninevites or Assyrians in Jonah.

Would this edict have affected the Jews in Judah who had returned from the 70 years of exile? Relate this to the cross-references in Ezra 1 and 4.

Judah was part of King Ahasuerus's kingdom. It was ruled over by the Persian Empire from the time of Cyrus.

Their enemies close by had written King Ahasuerus, and later King Artaxerxes, to stop them from rebuilding the city of Jerusalem.

The Jews there would also be destroyed.

#### Verses 4-8

What was Esther's response to Mordecai's sackcloth?

She writhed in great anguish (ESV—was deeply distressed) when she heard, but didn't know the reason for the sackcloth.

She sent clothes to him so that he would remove the sackcloth and come to the king's gate.

Mordecai refused the clothes and told Hathach about Haman's plan to destroy the Jews.

He even sent a copy of the edict / decree to Esther. He wanted her to plead for the Jews before the king.

#### Verses 9-12

What was Esther's response?

The king had not summoned her for 30 days.

Anyone who went to him without being summoned was killed unless he extended his scepter to that one.

#### Verses 13-17

What was Mordecai's reasoning and response back to Esther?

If she remained silent and the Jews were destroyed, so would she be. She was the only one of her father's house, so it would end with her death.

But he also said that relief and deliverance for the Jews would come from another source.

Discuss what your group learned about this statement Mordecai made. What was it based on?

Genesis 12

God promised to make a great nation of Abraham and give him and his descendants a certain land (Israel, the land of promise) forever.

Jeremiah 31

He spoke of a new covenant with Israel forever.

Ezekiel 37

God's everlasting covenant of peace is for Israel when He gathers them from all the nations and cleanses them as a whole, when He sanctifies them.

It seems that Mordecai knew these promises from the Lord about the Jews.

What was Mordecai's last point of reasoning to Esther?

She might have attained royalty for such a time as this.

How did she reply the last time?

Assemble the Jews in Susa to fast for her for 3 days.  
She and her maids would do the same.  
Then she would go to the king.  
If she perished, then she perished.

What was Esther willing to lay down to save her people?

Relate this to Mark 8:34-38 as the final application for this discussion.

She risked her life.

To follow Jesus

Deny self  
Take up cross (death to self)  
Lose life for His sake

## ESTHER LEADER GUIDE Lesson 3

### Lesson focus:

- Esther 5–7
- God in Esther

### REVIEW

To begin your discussion, you can ask your group what the main events are of Esther 1–4.

They might look at their At A Glance charts for this information.

You might also ask how they saw God in these chapters as you review them, or you can do that after discussing the facts of the chapters.

#### Esther 1

King Ahasuerus displayed his riches and splendor.

Queen Vashti was removed as queen.

3<sup>rd</sup> year of Ahasuerus's reign

#### Esther 2

Esther was made queen.

Mordecai's name was written in the chronicles.

7<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus's reign

#### Esther 3

Haman plotted to destroy the Jews.

12<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus's reign

#### Esther 4

Mordecai informed Esther to go to the king

How did Esther 4 end? What was Esther's request to Mordecai?

All the Jews in Susa were to fast for her 3 days before she went to the king to plead with him for her people.

## **ESTHER 5**

What are the events of this chapter?

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, the last day of fasting for her, she went to the king.

Again Esther was favored (2:9, 15, 17).

When King Ahasuerus asked for her request, she invited Haman and him to a banquet / feast.

Esther exhibited wisdom and humility before the king.

What does this chapter say about Haman?

He was glad and pleased of heart (ESV—joyful and glad of heart) to be invited two days in a row to a banquet / feast with the king and queen until he saw Mordecai.

Mordecai still didn't honor Haman.

So Haman's glad heart turned to anger again.

When he went home he built himself up before his wife and friends, those who changed their minds the next day. Haman displayed his greatness, as King Ahasuerus did in chapter 1.

You might give time for your group to briefly discuss that people still do this today. Did Esther display her beauty and status, or merely use it for good?

What was the suggestion to make Haman feel better?

Their suggestion was to hang Mordecai and end Haman's displeasure.

He had a gallows built 50 cubits (75 feet) high, which seems a bit extreme.

His hatred for the Jews and especially Mordecai was extreme.

The good things in his life were reduced because of it. His happiness was robbed by his hatred.

You can give time to discuss application of this.

## **ESTHER 6**

What happened in this chapter?

The king couldn't sleep, and it was read to him about Mordecai informing him of the plot in 2:21-23.

Haman had gone to see the king about hanging Mordecai. When planning how the king might honor him, Haman discovered that it was Mordecai who was to be honored.

Haman was the one mourning in this chapter.

But when he talked about it to his friends and wife, they predicted his fall before the Jews.

## **ESTHER 7**

What happened when Haman went to Esther's 2<sup>nd</sup> banquet / feast?

The king asked Esther again what her request was.

He was willing to give her half of his kingdom.

Again, Esther exhibited humility in exposing Haman and his plan to destroy her and her people.

What happened when the king discovered who Haman wanted to destroy?

Haman was terrified.

The king left in anger.

Haman begged Esther for his life.

When the king returned, he thought that Haman was trying to assault Esther.

Haman was taken away and hanged on the gallows he intended for Mordecai.

Mordecai was honored as Haman wanted to be, and he was hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai.

The predictions that his wife and friends made were true.

He fell before the Jew.

## **GOD**

For the last part of your discussion, unless you spread this out from the beginning, you might ask your group how they saw God in Esther.

Such as:

His sovereignty, He rules over all

Daniel 4:32

He raises people and brings low

1 Samuel 2:2, 6-10; Psalm 75:7

His everlasting promises to Israel, the Jews

Relate to the cross-references in Lesson 2.

Those who curse them, God will curse

Genesis 12:3; 27:29; Numbers 24:9  
(part of Balaam's oracle about Israel)

His justice in punishment

Psalm 94:1-5, 14-16, 22; 1 Kings 8:38-39; Romans 2:5-6

As a visual aid for this, you can list some of their main points.

## ESTHER LEADER GUIDE Lesson 4

### Lesson focus:

- Esther 8–10

### REVIEW

To begin your discussion you can ask your group what the main events are of Esther 1–7. They might look at their At A Glance charts for this information.

#### Esther 1

King Ahasuerus displayed his riches and splendor. Queen Vashti was removed as queen.

3<sup>rd</sup> year of his reign

#### Esther 2

Esther was made queen. Mordecai's name was written in the chronicles.

7<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus's reign, about 4 years after chapter 1

#### Esther 3

Haman plotted to destroy the Jews.

12<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus's reign, about 5 years after Esther was crowned queen

#### Esther 4

Mordecai informed Esther to go to the king.

#### Esther 5

Esther went to the king

#### Esther 6

King Ahasuerus honored Mordecai

#### Esther 7

Esther exposed Haman to the king, Haman was hanged

The events of Esther 3–7 took place within a few days during the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Ahasuerus’s reign.

When did chapters 8–10 take place?

During the same year as chapters 3–7.

If your group is noting the chapters of Esther on their timelines, then you can ask if they’ve done that for these chapters. Note Esther 3–10 close to 473, the Feast of Purim.

## **ESTHER 8**

How does the chapter begin?

On that day—the day Haman was hung

What are the events on that day?

Esther disclosed to the king her relationship to Mordecai.

The king gave Mordecai his signet ring, which indicated authority.

King Ahasuerus gave Haman’s house to Queen Esther, which probably meant all that Haman had. She then set Mordecai over it all.

When Esther wept and pleaded with the king to prevent Haman’s plan, the king again extended his golden scepter.

He could not revoke the letters to destroy the Jews because injunctions or statutes / ordinances signed by the king couldn’t be revoked according to the laws of the Medes and Persians (Daniel 6:8, 12, 15).

To correct the situation the king told Esther and Mordecai to write to the Jews as they saw fit and seal it with his signet ring.

How did Mordecai’s edict compare or contrast to Haman’s?

The chart on the “Two Edicts” is a good visual aid for this part of the discussion.

Scribes were called on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month to write Mordecai’s edict.

That was about 9 months prior to the day the Jews were to be destroyed according to Haman’s edict.

Mordecai's edict specifically mentioned it was to the Jews as well as to the leaders and people. It was written in the language and script of the Jews as well as everyone else's.

Both Haman's and Mordecai's edicts were sealed with the king's ring and sent by couriers riding steeds. This probably indicates that these were the fastest and strongest horses.

The Jews were granted to assemble and destroy, kill, and annihilate the entire army of any people or province who attacked them. They could kill those who tried to fulfill Haman's decree—avenging themselves.

Both edicts gave the right to plunder.

Both of the edicts called for action on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar, the 12<sup>th</sup> month.

What was the response to Mordecai and the decree?

When Mordecai went out in royal robes and a large crown of gold, the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced. Contrast this with the response to Haman's decree in 3:15.

Light, gladness, joy, and honor for the Jews.

A feast and a holiday for the Jews in every province.

Many became Jews, because of their dread of the Jews.

From the cross-references, what does "became Jews" mean?

Servants (from other nations) bought with money were to be circumcised as the Jews were—God's covenant in their flesh.

The sabbath was to be kept holy by strangers (those from other nations) who visited or lived in Israel. They, along with slaves in Israel, could celebrate the Passover like the native of the land if they were circumcised.

The same laws applied to all of them.

Ruth the Moabitess left her land and went with Naomi when she returned to Bethlehem in Israel. She said, "Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." She married Boaz, an Israelite, and birthed Obed, the grandfather of King David.

## ESTHER 9

When did this chapter take place? What happened?

13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar

the day Haman wanted to destroy the Jews

the day Esther and Mordecai saved the Jews

The Jews assembled against any who tried to harm them so that no one could.

Relate this to Haman. He couldn't stand before Mordecai the Jew.

The Jews killed 500 men in Susa, along with Haman's 10 sons.  
But they didn't take any plunder.

In the provinces, they killed 75,000 on that one day and again didn't take any plunder.

The king offered to grant Esther a further request, and she asked for the Jews in Susa to have one more day to do according to the edict and for Haman's ten sons to be hanged.

What happened on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar? Why hang dead men?

300 killed in Susa and Haman's 10 dead sons hanged

Whoever is hanged is seen as accursed of God.

The Jews in the provinces spent this day feasting and rejoicing, while the Jews in Susa feasted and rejoiced on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

What resulted from these two days?

Mordecai recorded the events and sent letters to celebrate the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of Adar annually with feasting, rejoicing and sending portions / or gifts of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

The days were called Purim after Pur, the lot, and were for the Jews, their descendants, and all who allied themselves with them.

Esther and Mordecai wrote to confirm the second letter  
—words of peace and truth  
—to establish Purim with instructions for their times of fasting and lamentations.

Let your group discuss what celebrating Purim would mean to a Jew today. It's still an annual holiday for them.

## **ESTHER 10**

Who is the focus of this chapter? What does the text say about him?

Mordecai

authority, strength (ESV—power and might)  
king advanced him to greatness (high honor)

second to King Ahasuerus  
great among the Jews and in favor with his many kinsmen  
(popular with multitude of his brothers)  
sought the good / welfare of his people (the Jews)  
spoke for the welfare of his whole nation (ESV—spoke peace to all his people)

Ask your group to contrast the ways Mordecai and Haman used their authority.

You could end by asking your group how God spoke to them

through the lives of Mordecai and Esther,  
through what they learned about God,  
through the study of the book of Esther.